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**TEACHERS' NEGOTIATION OF INCLUSIVE PRACTICE
IN NIGERIAN CLASSROOMS**

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PhD

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I composed this thesis and that this thesis or part of it has not been submitted elsewhere for another degree or professional qualification.

Mary Moyosore Taiwo

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the practices of teachers in Nigerian classrooms where children with disabilities are being educated alongside their peers. The research objective was to develop an understanding of how teachers in Nigerian classrooms are developing their practice. Since the commitment the Nigerian government to the provision of universal basic and inclusive education for all children, research and reports on what the implementation of inclusive practice entails have been carried out. These have been largely quantitative, focusing on the percentage of children with disabilities who now have access to basic education and the percentage of these children in regular schools or classrooms. The research in Nigeria has used surveys to determine the attitudes and readiness of teachers and school administrators to implement inclusive practice. The problems of implementing inclusive practice have also received attention.

It is against this background that this qualitative inquiry seeks to understand what is happening in classrooms with regard to the teaching and learning of all children. To address the main research question, *how are teachers with experience of inclusive education developing practice in Nigerian classrooms?* qualitative data was generated over eight weeks through the use of semi-structured (non-participant) classroom observations, which were followed-up by semi-structured interviews with 12 teachers from three different schools. To further enhance the understanding of the teachers' developing practices, the schools' administrators (either the principal or vice principal) and the resource persons were also interviewed. The overall design of the study was an instrumental-collective case study in which teachers were purposively sampled on the basis of their experience of inclusive education. This design was based on the understanding that inclusive practice is developed through an interaction of what teachers do, what they believe and what they know. Thus, a single factor of readiness and a positive attitude does not fully account for the development of practice (Rouse, 2008).

The framework for participation, developed by Black-Hawkins (2010; 2014), guided the process of data generation and the analysis. This research is based on an understanding of inclusive practice as a process of addressing and responding to diverse learning needs that emphasizes how this response is provided. This understanding provided the premise within which the data was deductively (i.e. theoretically driven) analysed. An inductive approach to the analysis was also added to the deductive process of analysing the data generated in order to develop an understanding of the case teachers' classroom practices. Three main findings emerged from this study. Firstly, teachers' actions are influenced by their understanding of what teaching and learning are, as well as their knowledge and beliefs about the process through which children with disabilities are expected to learn. Case teachers' knowledge was found to have significantly influenced their practices. Secondly, there was an absence of collaborative efforts between teachers and/or between teachers and resource persons available within the school context. This absence of

collaboration is often associated with a lack of understanding or clarity with regard to the role of resource persons. Thirdly, this study identified barriers and opportunities that were embedded in teachers' developing practice. The barriers include an absence of a sense of shared values in the classroom between all members of the classroom community, while the opportunities include the use of information from students with disabilities as a source of support to enhance classroom practice.

This research contributes to the literature on inclusive classroom practice, especially the strand of literature that in recent years has called for investigations into what inclusive classroom practice comprises and when such practice can be identified on the basis of clearly stated underpinning principles (Florian, 2014b). In using clearly identified principles, it was possible to identify that both inclusive and exclusive practices can be present in the same classroom context and why this is so. Through the use of the framework for participation and theoretical ideas developed and used in researching inclusive education in a different context, this thesis has demonstrated the extent to which these ideas can be applicable in other contexts. In so doing some findings have been reasserted and new insight situated in a particular context has been developed. It is therefore argued that understanding the processes of developing inclusive practice requires a need to situate practice in the broader cultural assumptions, expectations and values of teaching and learning.

The findings are discussed and recommendations such as the need for a more deliberate and collaborative efforts in working with resource persons to enhance classroom teachers' ability to address learning difficulties while developing their inclusive classroom practice are made. The conclusion drawn is that teachers with experience of inclusive education in Nigeria are developing practice that meets some of the theoretical standards of inclusive classroom practice. Regardless of this, there are certain cultural assumptions, understandings and ideas that need to be reflected on and reviewed in order for practice to be further developed and improved upon in Nigeria.

CONTENTS

DECLARATION	2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	3
ABSTRACT	4
CONTENTS	6
CHAPTER ONE	11
INTRODUCTION	11
1.1 Introducing the research.....	11
1.2 Developing a research interest.....	14
1.3 Positioning myself in the research process	16
1.3.1 <i>My role as the researcher (an insider or an outsider)</i>	19
1.4 Structure of thesis	20
CHAPTER TWO	22
THE RESEARCH CONTEXT	22
2.1 Introduction.....	22
2.2 Nigeria as a country	22
2.3 System of education in Nigeria.....	23
2.3.1 <i>School enrolment in Nigeria</i>	23
2.4 Education for children with disabilities in Nigeria.....	24
2.4.1 <i>Focusing on current statistics</i>	24
2.4.2 <i>Historical background</i>	25
2.4.3 <i>Formal education for children with disabilities in Nigeria: development of policy and practice</i>	26
2.5 Inclusive education	30
2.5.1 <i>Development of the concept</i>	30
2.5.2 <i>Defining inclusive education</i>	33
2.6 Literature on inclusive education in Nigeria.....	36
2.6.1 <i>Government Documents</i>	36
3.6.2 <i>Research on inclusive education in Nigeria</i>	39

CHAPTER THREE.....	43
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	43
3.1 Introduction	43
3.2 Inclusive classroom practice.....	44
3.2.1 <i>Learning in inclusive classrooms</i>	45
3.2.2 <i>Teaching practices</i>	48
3.2.3 <i>Effective teaching practices in developing countries</i>	52
3.3 Research on inclusive classroom practice	56
3.3.1 <i>Using an alternative approach in researching inclusive classroom practice</i>	63
3.4 Principles of inclusive classroom practice.....	66
3.4.1 <i>Background to principles of inclusive classroom practice</i>	66
3.4.2 <i>Explaining the principles of inclusive classroom practice</i>	69
3.5 Framework for participation	80
3.5.1 <i>Development of the framework for participation</i>	81
3.5.2 <i>Elements of the framework for participation</i>	82
3.6 Research aim and question	87
CHAPTER FOUR.....	90
METHODOLOGY.....	90
4.1 Introduction.....	90
4.2 Research paradigm (ontology and epistemology)	91
4.3 Research approach and design.....	92
4.3.1 <i>An instrumental - collective case study</i>	93
4.3.2 <i>Generalizability of case studies</i>	94
4.4 Process of Sampling.....	96
4.5 Method and process of data generation	99
4.5.1 <i>Non-participant (semi – structured) observations</i>	102
4.5.2 <i>Semi-structured Interviews</i>	108
4.6 Ethics	114
4.7 Quality in qualitative research	118

CHAPTER FIVE.....	123
ANALYSIS AND RESULTS	123
5.1 Introduction.....	123
5.2 Approach and strategy	123
5.3 Getting started – <i>The preliminary stage</i>	124
5.4 Gaining insights - <i>Stage 1</i>	127
5.5 Making sense - <i>Stage 2</i>	129
5.5.1 <i>Merging section in the framework for participation</i>	131
5.5.2 <i>Concluding stage 2 of data analysis</i>	134
5.6 Deciding the outcome - <i>Stage 3</i>	135
5.7 Findings structure	137
CHAPTER SIX	141
ENACTING THE PRINCIPLES OF	141
INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM PRACTICE	141
6.1 Introduction.....	141
6.2 Shift in focus from some children to all children	141
6.3 Rejecting the notion of fixed ability	151
6.3.1 <i>The presence of children with disabilities holding back the progress of others</i>	153
6.3.2 <i>Students’ role in learning progress</i>	159
6.4 Difficulties in learning as a professional challenge (finding new ways of working with others)	160
6.4.1 <i>Resource persons’ perspectives of their roles</i>	167
CHAPTER SEVEN.....	173
TEACHERS’ BELIEFS, KNOWLEDGE AND ACTIONS	173
7.1 Introduction.....	173
7.2 Teachers’ knowledge, beliefs and actions	173
7.2.1 <i>Influence of teachers’ beliefs on their actions</i>	174
7.2.2 <i>Influence of teachers’ knowledge on their actions</i>	183
7.2.3 <i>Relating beliefs, knowledge and actions</i>	189

7.3 Opportunities and barriers in case teachers' developing inclusive classroom practices.....	190
7.3.1 Barriers	190
7.3.2 Possibilities	198
CHAPTER EIGHT	203
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	203
8.1 Introduction.....	203
8.2 Summary and conclusion.....	203
8.3 Contribution to knowledge	211
8.4 Limitations	214
8.5 Recommendations.....	218
REFERENCES.....	220
APPENDIX A	240
APPENDIX B	241
APPENDIX C	243
APPENDIX D	244
APPENDIX E	246
APPENDIX F.....	250
APPENDIX G	253
APPENDIX H	254
APPENDIX I.....	260
APPENDIX J	261
APPENDIX K.....	262
APPENDIX L	263
APPENDIX M	265

List to tables

Table 1: Principles of inclusive classroom practice70

Table 2: Framework for participation84

Table 3: Table showing summary of research participants.....101

List of figures

Figure 1: Example of sketches from classroom observation104

Figure 2: Structure of chart used to depict case teachers’ practice138

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introducing the research

This thesis presents a study aimed at investigating how teachers with experience of inclusive education, with regard to children with disabilities, are enacting their practice in Nigerian classrooms. In using the term ‘inclusive classroom practice’, I refer to particular decisions and actions taken and the plans made by teachers in their classrooms with the aim of enhancing the teaching and learning experiences of all children (Black-Hawkins, 2014; Booth, Ainscow, Black-Hawkins, Vaughan, & Shaw, 2002; Florian, 2009; Rose, 1998). Although inclusive practice is about the learning experiences of all children in the classroom community, I am particularly interested in how teachers in Nigerian classrooms respond to students who are vulnerable to being excluded from learning activities in the classroom community because of a disability.

I agree with the argument that teachers’ inclusive practice (as a social phenomenon) can be effectively understood if priority is accorded to the *processes* involved in how such practice is executed on a day-to-day basis in classrooms (Black-Hawkins, Florian, & Rouse, 2007; Kershner, 2007; Singal, 2005, 2014). I have also developed an understanding that commitments to inclusive practice as expressed within national policies have little impact, until they are effectively translated into working practices that enables successful learning progress to be achieved for all learners (Fullan, 2007; Phillips & Ochs, 2003; Rose, Shevlin, Winter, & O’Raw, 2010). More importantly, I agree with the argument that inclusive classroom practice involves a process of creating a community of learners in which legitimate opportunities are provided for all to learn and progress individually, as well as collectively, as members of the classroom community (Black-Hawkins, 2014). This process of learning and achievement is developed and managed in such a manner that no one is stigmatized or marked out as different from the others because of a learning need arising from a disability (Florian &

Black-Hawkins, 2011). Basically, having a child with a disability physically present in a classroom without engaging them in the learning process alongside other members of the classroom community is not an effective implementation of inclusive classroom practice (Booth, 2003; Booth et al., 2002).

Following on from my understanding of inclusive practice, as stated above, I raised the question, *how are teachers with the experience of inclusive education developing their practice in Nigerian classrooms?* In order to enhance my ability to understand this process of negotiation, I also asked two sub research questions. These sub-questions were:

1. *What type of practice are these teachers engaging with?*
2. *In what ways are the elements of 'believing, knowing and doing' interacting in these teachers classroom practices?*

These sub research questions guided the explorative process that enabled me to adequately address the main research question and the purpose of this research. I conducted an instrumental case study of twelve teachers in three different school contexts over a period of eight weeks. These teachers were sampled on the basis of the phenomenon that they represented (Silverman, 2010), and they were seen as collective during the process of data analysis (Stake, 2005). They were then observed and interviewed through the use of semi-structured (non-participant) observation and semi-structured interviews. Significant others (i.e. resource persons and a school administrator) within each school context were also interviewed. The qualitative data generated was analysed through a combination of deductive and inductive processes of qualitative data analysis. I used the framework for participation developed by Black-Hawkins (2014); Black-Hawkins (2010) as a methodological tool and an overall framework in structuring how the data were generated and analysed.

In planning and carrying out this research, I was interested in how teachers in Nigerian classrooms who have experience of teaching a class where children with disabilities are learning alongside their peers are developing their classroom practice. I was therefore keen to analyse data on teachers' classroom practice to examine how certain principles of inclusive classrooms are being developed or have been developed and are being applied by the participating teachers in their classroom practice. The purpose of this study was to explore teachers' actions with the aim of understanding why they take these actions and what assumption informs the actions that they take towards including children with disabilities in their classroom learning activities. This is what the term developing and negotiation of practice refers to in the research question raised, as well as the topic of this research. The crux of this study is to explore the kind of steps, decisions and activities that teachers engage with in order to understand what is ongoing and what type of learning opportunities they make available for all children, including the child or children with disabilities learning in the regular classroom.

As a result of the process of data analysis the framework for participation was adapted. Two main sections of the framework were merged into a single category, thereby making this category or section of the framework broader. Moreover, it emerged that teachers with the experience of inclusive education are developing practices that reflect different aspects of the process of including children with disabilities in the learning processes taking place in classrooms. However, there were certain aspects of developing practice such as creating a community where all members (including adults) are also seen as learners and an inadequate knowledge base that can inform the development of more inclusive practices that were found to have significantly impinged on the participating teachers' developing practices. It is therefore argued that there is a need for a continuous focus on those aspects of practice that are barriers to teachers' developing practice. This will minimize the continuing effect of having to place the problem of learning with learners or the individual learner because of a specific learning need.

Throughout this thesis I use the term children with disabilities instead of disabled children. This decision was based on how I have conceptualized persons with disabilities

as “those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and potential participation in society on an equal basis with others” (UNCRPWD, 2006, p. 4). In the above definition, an individual with an impairment (as part of who they are) becomes disadvantaged when their uniqueness (which leads them to have particular needs) interacts with the societal structures and then becomes a barrier that prevents them from becoming full participants in their immediate or wider community (Shakespeare, 2006). This understanding focuses on the individual as a person and not the impairment. Taking this stance is particularly important and is worth emphasising in developing countries such as Nigeria, where persons with disabilities are still marginalized and more often disadvantaged in and by the society (Singal, 2010).

1.2 Developing a research interest

Early on in my teacher education degree, I developed an interest in working as a teacher educator. Soon after completing my Bachelor’s degree, I began to work as a member of support staff, supporting students with a hearing impairment as they progress through their university level education. As an early career teacher during this period, I attended a Nigerian teachers’ conference (this was about five years ago). The general sense of discussion at this particular conference tended to reflect the understanding and conclusions that inclusive practice was not a feasible practice under any circumstances in a country such as Nigeria.

I was mesmerized by the fact that in the course of the conference proceedings, inclusive practice was toyed with as a ‘Western’ idea that should stay in or be ventured into by developed countries because they are capable of implementing and achieving this type of practice. One of the justifications provided to support this assumption was the idea that each type or nature of disability has its particular psychology. Another basis for the above argument was that the way in which children with specific disabilities learn is specific and that a regular classroom teacher is not able to understand the psychology of any particular disability. Thus regular classroom teachers cannot effectively teach a

child with a disability alongside their peers. A further justification given was that Nigeria does not have the resources (such as the structural, financial and human resources) to manage this process.

Even though these issues raised provided reasonable grounds on which to reconsider the idea of implementing inclusive classroom practice in the Nigerian context, I had some serious reservations about these arguments. These reservations were informed by my previous experience in special schools. While training to become a teacher, I had two placement experiences in special schools. These experiences had already made me start questioning the efficacy of special schools in providing the relevant and necessary educational experiences that can enable children with disabilities to maximize all of the opportunities and potential that they have. Moreover, I also experienced how support services in schools (at the tertiary level) enabled students with disabilities to learn and progress in their educational endeavours. This tension ignited my intellectual curiosity, which led me to begin research on inclusive practice.

My initial response to these agitations was to embark on a Master's degree in a western country where I could learn about how they have made progress in practice. As part of my Master's degree, I carried out research that explored inclusive practice in one school in Nigeria. The study focused on exploring teachers' perspectives on and understanding of inclusive practice. While the study found that the teachers in that particular school practised inclusion, they were faced with barriers and challenges that sometimes prevented them from doing what they wanted to do (Taiwo, 2011).

While learning about the different perspectives on inclusive education in the UK, I soon realized that the underpinning assumptions and understandings of inclusive practice expressed by the teachers at the Nigerian conference were neither entirely new nor limited to teachers in Nigeria. I also realized that as much as I wanted to learn about what inclusive practice is and how it is being developed in a developed country, a process aimed at enhancing my ability to understand how it could be or is being

developed further in Nigerian classrooms, I needed to be sensitive to the context within which these practices are being developed in my interpretation of the issues¹.

Beyond contextual sensitivity, there is a need for a clearer level of awareness of how teachers' beliefs, knowledge and actions interact with each other in a manner that either enhances or inhibits the effective process of implementing inclusive practice (Jordan, Glenn, & McGhie-Richmond, 2010; Rouse, 2007). Teaching and learning in general must also then be understood in the light of all of the actions that are acted out and the discourses that surround and more importantly inform these actions (Alexander, 1996, 2001, 2004). Besides this, I have also had a growing realization that understanding the process of teaching and learning that enhances the inclusion or exclusion of children in classroom learning needs to be understood in-depth in order to move beyond the inclusion/exclusion rhetoric and become more focused on the realities in classrooms and how these processes are intricately intertwined (Armstrong, Armstrong, & Spandagou, 2011; Rose et al., 2010; Singal, 2005, 2009; Singal & Muthukrishna, 2014).

All of this became particularly important in the light of my proposed career plan to become a teacher educator. Since I did not have a clear focus on teachers' practices and how their practices were being developed, or whether or not they had specific principles of inclusive classroom practice, I decided to pursue a doctorate to explore these issues. Focusing on teachers' developing practice has allowed this research to explore how some teachers are able to be inclusive in the context of the prevailing attitudes and resistance to the concept and practice of inclusive education.

1.3 Positioning myself in the research process

Shortly after designing this research and gaining all of the necessary ethical and research approvals, I started negotiating access to the research context. It was during this period that I came to terms with the reality of how involved I was in the research process. At the initial stage of writing the research proposal, I imagined that I would be able to distance myself in order to remain as critical as possible. However, I gradually realized

¹ These issues are presented in chapter two

how unrealistic and difficult that was. Moreover, I soon realized that having situated my research within the social constructivist research paradigm, in which the researcher's values and role(s) in the research are acknowledged, there was a need for me to become transparent as to what role(s) I played in the research process (Charmaz, 2014; Simons, 2009; Turnbull, 1987). I decided to become more reflective about my role in the research process (Patton, 2002; Peshkin, 1988).

Reflexivity in research involves a process in which researchers continuously question what they know, what they need to know and what evidence they are generating (Patton, 2002; Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009). I have explained how my research interest and curiosity has progressed over the years in section 1.2 above. That I believe has provided the relevant background about who I am as the researcher carrying out this research. Following on continuation from that background, I will be reflecting on the various I's (Simons, 2009) that were relevant to this research.

The background and discussion provided in chapter two and chapter three of this thesis represents my inclusive 'I'. On the basis of that narration and as someone who already questioned the efficacy of special or separate provision of education for children with disabilities, I knew that deep down I wanted to see inclusive education happening. I wanted to see that the teachers were making some effort to include children with disabilities in their classrooms. This could have hindered me from seeing practices that were exclusive, or perhaps stopped me from seeing those moments where a child's learning needs were not adequately met.

Alternatively, I could have failed to see that something different was provided for the child rather than extending what was already available for all children following the definition of inclusive practice that I had already established as underpinning this study. Perhaps that hindered me from seeing where more could have been done in the practices of the case teachers. With this, I present my inclusive 'I', which is the first 'I' that presented itself in this research. This aspect of my subjective self, I tried to manage by continuously going back and forth between what was happening in the field and in the

data during the process of data analysis and the theoretical underpinnings and ideas of inclusive practice (Charmaz, 2014). This was a useful strategy that supported my interpretation of case teachers' practice.

The second 'I' emerged soon after I started the process of sampling. Following a theoretical sampling process, I was soon led to a school where I had previously been acquainted with most of the teachers and the school principal. I was even more concerned when the Principal contacted me to allow me access to the school and classrooms for the research. In this regard, I was excited to be working with the teachers in the school but then I wondered: how would I handle the situation if I discovered that they were not really being inclusive in their classrooms? Would I be critical enough to point out exclusive practices? Or would I overlook their practice by being too critical and write them off as being exclusive because of my familiarity with some of the teachers in the school? This was the friendly 'I' that emerged in the research process. Should I act as an outsider, putting aside my previous relationships with the teachers and emphasize my new role as a researcher? Or should I manage both? I will explain this in subsection 1.3.1 below.

Lastly, I also had the educator/researcher 'I'. At the point of carrying out the research, I had encountered a lot of literature on inclusive practice, some of which is reflected in the discussion in chapters two and three of this thesis. Thus I was interpreting things from a distance, seeing the development of education in Nigeria in a different light, being exposed to advanced and theoretical literature on inclusive education, education for children with disabilities and how other developed countries defined, explained and interpreted inclusive practice. I could not help but feel extremely critical of some of the efforts and literature on what inclusive practice is in Nigeria. My attention was drawn to this especially while I was sampling my research participants.

I had been referred to some schools by a more experienced expert in the field of education for children with disabilities in Nigeria. On visiting those schools, I immediately made up my mind that their practices were not inclusive. This expert made

the effort to contact me a few days later to ask me how my visits to the recommended schools had gone. I felt that he was an expert so he would understand and therefore I explained some of my experiences to him, as well as what I was expecting to see. I explained that what I had seen did not meet the criteria that I had set for the sampling of participants. It was at this point that he reminded me that this was Nigeria and that I should not be expecting to see whatever it was that I had already been exposed to in the UK. This conversation stayed with me and made me reflect more on the influence of the context on whatever practice I came across and the need for me to understand whatever practice I came across in the context of what classrooms in Nigeria are. For me, it was a call that reminded me of the notion of teaching and learning in another context (Alexander, 1996) and the need to understand classroom activities in the light of the culture within which they are situated (Alexander, 2000, 2001). This meant that I had three 'I's that I had to continuously be aware of and negotiate throughout the research work, data analysis and writing up of the research report. These were the inclusive 'I', the friendly 'I' (at least in one school) and the educator/researcher 'I'. To effectively reflect on these 'I's' (Simons, 2009), I came to terms with my role as both an insider and an outsider in the research context.

1.3.1 My role as the researcher (an insider or an outsider)

After I had come to realize these 'I's' that I needed to negotiate, I came to recognize that I had a role in this research process that reflected being both an outsider and an insider to the research context. I decided to use that awareness and consciously negotiate both roles. In deciding to take on both roles, I was wary of the fact that people relate to one another through culturally understood roles in which obligations and responsibilities are known to both parties (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). I regarded myself as an outsider in some ways. First, I am a researcher, and not only a researcher but also a researcher from a University outside Nigeria. Furthermore, in as much as I am a trained teacher, I have only had limited teaching experience in classrooms within primary and secondary schools. I have had more experience with students at the university level. Therefore, I was watchful of the possible role that could be assigned to me by the research

participants. It was on this basis that I deliberately made efforts to present myself as an insider by acting in ways that the participants could accept and understand.

I tried to explore those aspects of who I was that the research participants could easily relate with (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). One of the ways in which I did this was in my dress code. Instead of making myself look foreign or different, I adopted a dress code that made me look moderate, respectful and genuine. I adhered to the tradition of wearing traditional clothing to work on a Friday (this is a practice common to most organizations in Nigeria). I also made sure that I spoke in a manner that they could easily relate to. Although all of our conversations were in English, I tended to speak more of what one of the research participant termed as ‘African English’. Some of the research participants were quick to point that out. Moreover, I was always willing to let them know that I had gone through my education up to my undergraduate degree level in Nigeria. So it might take a while for me to lose touch with my Nigerian descent. These were some of the bases upon which I built up the research relationship with the participants. The other details of my interactions with the research participants are reflected in chapter four of this thesis.

1.4 Structure of thesis

This thesis is divided into eight chapters. The first chapter introduces the thesis. I have also positioned myself as the researcher in this chapter. In chapter two, I discuss the educational context of Nigeria. In doing this, I provide some background information, as well as explaining the main themes present in the literature on inclusive education and inclusive practice in the Nigerian context. Chapter three presents a review of the literature on inclusive classroom practice. This chapter provides the background and discusses the theoretical ideas that informed this research work. After the literature review, I present the methodological decisions that I made throughout the process of carrying out this research work in chapter four.

Chapter five presents the process of analysis and the outcome of the process of engaging with the framework for participation and the data that was generated. The findings that

emerged from the process of data analysis are presented and discussed in chapters six and seven. This thesis concludes in chapter eight where I provide an overview of the research findings; draw my factual and conceptual conclusions; reflect on the implications of these conclusions; and discuss the limitations of this research work. I make recommendations of areas for possible further research, as well as possible ways forward based on the findings that emerged in this chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

THE RESEARCH CONTEXT

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides some background information on the research context. In order to achieve this, I explain the general system of education in Nigeria. In addition, I also discuss education for children with disabilities within the current system of education in Nigeria. Throughout this chapter, I will be highlighting and identifying the gaps in the literature on inclusive classroom practice within the Nigerian context that this research aims to fill. To this effect, this chapter is divided into six main sections. In section 2.2, I provide some basic factual information on Nigeria as a country. Section 2.3 provides an overview of the current education system in Nigeria. After this, I discuss education for children with disabilities in Nigeria (past and present) in section 2.4. This discussion then leads on to section 2.5 in which I explain what inclusive education is in the context of this thesis. In section 2.6, I reflect on the literature on inclusive education for children with disabilities in Nigeria.

2.2 Nigeria as a country

Nigeria is a Sub-Saharan African country located in West Africa. The location and geography of Nigeria are depicted in the maps in Appendix A. Currently, it is estimated that about 170 million persons are resident in Nigeria (British Council, 2012; Odimegwu, 2013; UNFPA, 2011). There is a 50/50 split in the rural-urban settlement of these residents and about 50 – 70% of the population are aged below 35 (British Council, 2012; UNFPA, 2011), a reflection of the country's life expectancy at birth, which is placed at age 52 (UNDP, 2013; UNFPA, 2011; United Nations, 2011). Nigeria in recent years has experienced a gradual increase in life expectancy at birth, mean years

of schooling, expected years of schooling and in its Gross national income (UNDP, 2013).

2.3 System of education in Nigeria

The current structure of education in Nigeria is 9 – 3 – 4 years of education (FRN, 2009; FRN, 2004). This structure implies 9 years of Universal Basic Education (UBE), 3 years of Senior Secondary (SS) education and 4 years of Tertiary Education (TE). The 9 years of basic education are divided into two phases. The first phase, comprising the first 6 years of basic education is also referred to as Primary Education (PE), and the final 3 years are the years of Junior Secondary Education (JSE).

2.3.1 School enrolment in Nigeria

In Nigeria, it is currently estimated that 10.5 million children out of about 65.2 million children of school going age are out of school (Institute for Statistics UNESCO, 2012; UNFPA, 2011). The current average enrolment rate for children is placed at 57.6% (UN, 2012). However, the attendance and completion rate for primary education is placed at an average of about 74.4% for both boys and girls. These figures and rates can be attributed to various interrelated factors (Barnard, 2009; Filmer, 2008; Groce, Kett, Lang, & Trani, 2011; Singal, 2014; Singal & Muthukrishna, 2014; UNESCO, 2012; WHO, 2011). Some of these factors include: poverty; disability; high population growth and density; family income; exposure to child labour; conflict and natural disasters; location; migrations and displacement; HIV and AIDS; gender; ethnicity; caste; orphans; nomads; refugees; language of instruction; child witches; and religion (UNESCO, 2000, 2005; UNESCO, 2012).

More recently, factors such as insecurity, terrorist attacks and health concerns related to communicable diseases such as Ebola have also influenced attendance in schools in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is these factors that influence access to, retention in and the participation of all children in schools and classrooms. However, as I have already

stated, the focus of this particular research is on teachers' classroom practices with regard to children with disabilities. My decision to focus on disability and more precisely on teachers' classroom practice is based on: firstly, my professional background and interest; secondly, how my research interest has evolved over the years; and lastly, yet very importantly, other theoretical justifications that are based on the gaps in the Nigerian literature that I identified while developing the proposal for this research.

2.4 Education for children with disabilities in Nigeria

2.4.1 *Focusing on current statistics*

The Nigerian government has estimated that about 3.5 million children of school going age (i.e. between 4 – 16 years) are living with a disability in Nigeria (FME, 2008). Out of this number, only about 5% are enrolled in a primary or secondary schools across the country (FME, 2008). A recent survey in one state in Nigeria indicated that less than 30% of persons with disabilities have completed any form of educational qualifications across all of the different levels and forms of education (Smith, 2011)². These statistics indicate how disability alone significantly influences access to and participation of children in schools and classrooms within an educational system. This situation also applies to other developing countries (Filmer, 2008; WHO, 2011).

This influence of disability on educational experiences has also been a result of a continuing focus on disabilities that are either visual or physical in nature. The high proportion of these types of disabilities is a result of the inadequate preventive medicine. This situation is a reflection of the poor health care services and a lack of early interventions on health issues or accidents both in Nigeria (FMWASD, 2011; Smith, 2011) and in other developing countries (Peters, 2003; Singal, 2014; WHO, 2011). These types of disabilities are more often the most marginalized (Peters, 2003).

² This percentage covers both formal and informal education. A large proportion of persons with disabilities have access to vocational training without having access to other basic skills. These basic skills include reading and writing. Smith (2011) also reported that only 1% of the population in her study had any form of formal education.

2.4.2 Historical background

Historically, formal education for children with disabilities in Nigeria was established by missionaries in the mid-1950s (Abang, 2005; Ozoji, 2005). Prior to this, the initial attitude and response towards the education of children with disabilities varied across Nigeria. Children with disabilities were educated or responded to (i.e. within the informal education system that existed) based on the predominant culture and beliefs of the immediate community in which they were born or lived. In some of the centrally located states for instance, if a child was born with a visible disability, that child was killed by starvation or poison or was abandoned in the bush or by the river. These actions were based on the belief that the child would later become a snake and return to wherever he/she had come from. If a disability was acquired, it was then assumed that the person had offended the gods or was being punished for a wrongful deed (Abang, 2005; Atitebi, 1987; Ozoji, 2005).

In some parts of Nigeria, if a child was born with a disability, he/she was allowed to live and be cared for by their immediate family. The myth surrounding this practice was that the mother would bear another child with the same condition in her next pregnancy if the child were harmed in any way. In this instance, the child's needs were cared for, but the child was hidden away from the public. This practice was based on the assumption that the child's behaviour in the community (either misbehaviour or the act of begging from others) would become a source of embarrassment to the family's reputation. In some instances, if the child survived and grew up to become an adult he/she would sometimes be seen as representative of God and would be consulted on important matters in the community (Atitebi, 1987). Although the predominant attitude and response towards persons with disabilities was more of disdain and rejection, there were a few exceptions to these practices (Ihenacho, 1985; Ingstad, 2001; Kisanji, 1995). The example above, of the person with a disability being seen as a representative of God, is an example of one of these exceptions. These exceptions were also determined

by: the nature of the disability;³ the socio-economic status of the family; if the disability was less visible at birth; and if the child with the disability was able to live up to the expectations of the community regardless of his/her disability (Abang, 2005; Ihenacho, 1985; Ingstad, 2001; Ozoji, 2005).

With regard to the last two factors above, children (regardless of their disability) were exposed to and given the same opportunities to learn what was learnt by all of the other children in the community. They were allowed to do this within their ability, and/or dependent on support from their peers where necessary. Their ability to meet the societal demands and expectations, or at least the effort they made to meet those demands and expectations at any stage of their life was then used as a criterion for their acceptance and acknowledgement as members of the community (Ingstad, 2001; Kisanji, 1998). Their acceptance and recognition in some ways depended on the contributions they made and the roles that they were able to take in their families and the community at large. Therefore, both positive and negative attitudes existed within the same country context. This scenario was not peculiar to Nigeria, it was also applicable to other developing and developed contexts across the world (Abang, 2005; Ingstad, 2001; Ozoji, 2005; Winzer, 2007). The problem was seen as being with the individual and they were responsible for their ability to overcome the disability, fit in, and thereby become accepted.

2.4.3 Formal education for children with disabilities in Nigeria: development of policy and practice

Formal education in schools began in the mid – 1950s in Nigeria. The establishment of specially designated schools to educate children with disabilities meant that children (and adults) with disabilities were taken out of their immediate communities to be formally educated in separate settings away from their non-disabled peers (Ingstad, 2001) . This pattern of formal educational provision for children with disabilities has

³ For instance, those with a physical, visual or hearing disability were regarded as people who had supernatural powers, while albinos were seen as great herbalist.

mostly continued in Nigeria. Previous policies on education (FRN, 1977, 1982, 1998) have provided for the education of children with disabilities in separate schools and/or integrated settings where possible.⁴

Following the transition to a new democratically elected government in 1999, the government was represented at Dakar in 2000, where the international community reiterated its commitment to Education for All (EFA) (UNESCO, 1990) and the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994). In reiterating its commitment to education for all children, UNESCO (2000) made inclusive education a key and necessary means through which its prior commitments to educating all children and adults can be achieved. For member countries renewing their commitment and for countries such as Nigeria who were signatories to EFA and not the Salamanca agreement, this presented an opportunity for them to put into practice international developments in this area, in terms of policies and practice of their country's education system.

True to its commitment, the Nigerian government revised the National Policy on Education by 2004. This revision was aimed at ensuring that all children, including those who are vulnerable and marginalized, have access to and are able to participate in learning activities in schools and classrooms. The current National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004, 2009) states that the children with disabilities whose educational needs should be addressed are those with a visual impairment, a hearing impairment, a physical or health impairment, mental 'retardation', an emotional disturbance, a speech impairment, a learning disability, or multiple handicapping conditions. This definition specifically states which children with disabilities should be included in schools and classrooms. The nature of this statement within the policy on education raises issues and concerns about who should be included (or not) and implications regarding the identification and labelling of children. What impact and difference does it make if a child is identified and labelled as having a specific disability within the education system?

⁴ The differences between separate and segregated settings will be discussed later.

Judging by the use of these labels in the context of the policy documents in Nigeria, labels have been used as a tool to help in resource allocation so as to support the education of children with disabilities. An example of this is the *Universal Basic Education Act* (UBEC, 2004), which states that children with disabilities are to be educated under the UBE Scheme. The UBE act goes further to encourage state governments to implement inclusive education in their various states. From the total fund available for the Universal basic education scheme 5% is specifically assigned to the education of the physically and mentally disabled. State governments are only able to access and utilize these funds when they are able to provide evidence that they are providing an inclusive education (whichever way they define it) for children with disabilities.

This is one side of the coin with regard to how labels can be used to facilitate the necessary support for children with disabilities to be educated alongside their peers. It also means that children who have been identified as having one of these disabilities are enabled to have access to schools and classrooms because schools are encouraged to allow them to have such access. This presents an example of how labels and categories are used only for political or administrative purposes in resource allocation within an education system. Using labels or categories of disabilities as such, although useful, does not necessarily facilitate a systemic process that can enable the planning and monitoring of teaching and learning activities in schools and classrooms (Norwich, 2014).

On the other side of the coin, the use of labels and categories, as reflected in the policy on education in Nigeria, also means that some children are either not allowed into schools and classrooms or are not provided with the necessary support required to enhance the quality of their learning experiences in schools and classrooms. In most instances, children with mild learning difficulties often fall into this latter group of educational experiences. This trend is mostly visible in the education systems of developing countries such as Nigeria, where certain types of disabilities are prioritized over others (Peters, 2003).

Prioritizing some types of disabilities over others in developing countries, Peters (2003) explains, is a result of the need to politically reflect a system of education that is inclusive or has made progress towards being inclusive because of the presence of physical (or easily visible) disabilities. These visible disabilities, as listed by Peters (2003), include the moderately and severely disabled, which covers physical/mobility impairment; hearing impairment; visual impairment; and intellectual difficulties/learning disabilities. All of these have easily identifiable characteristics. The other and perhaps most important reason for prioritizing these types of disabilities, Peters (2003) adds, is because of the historical fact that children (and adults) with these type of disabilities are the most disadvantaged and marginalized in educational provisions in most developing countries.

I explained earlier in sub-section 2.4.2 how children born with visible disabilities were discriminated against and responded to in Nigeria. Also, while discussing the population of persons with disabilities in sub-section 2.4.1 above, I stated that illness and accident are the most common causes of disability in Nigeria. This has also accounted for the high proportion of persons with physical, visual or hearing disabilities amongst the population of persons with disabilities in Nigeria (FMWASD, 2011). The most recent survey on the types and prevalence of disability in Nigeria revealed that the most common type of disabilities in households were physical (i.e. they affected mobility), visual or hearing in nature (FMWASD, 2011; Smith, 2011). These three types of disabilities were found to account for about 63 percent of persons with disabilities. This percentage falls within the range of the spectrum of disabilities in developing countries provided in an earlier survey by Wiman, Helander, and Westland (2002). Wiman et al. (2002) estimated that these three types of disabilities (Visual, hearing and physical) accounted for 70 percent of the persons with disabilities in developing countries.

These statistics could be one of the reasons why certain types of disabilities are clearly stated in the policy on education in Nigeria, and why efforts sometimes appear to focus on particular disabilities and not disabilities in general. Moreover, it can also be argued that another reason for this nature of approach to inclusive education in Nigeria, as well

as in other developing countries is an inadequate system that can enhance the process of identifying children's learning needs in schools and classrooms. This often means that children are allowed access to schools without determining whether they have a specific learning need. Examples of such needs that can easily be left unidentified include: dyslexia, behaviour problems and mild learning difficulties. As a result, it is easier to provide for and support students with easily identifiable disabilities. This leaves those with mild disabilities struggling through their educational experience or, in some instances they drop out of school before completing their years of basic education (ESSPIN, 2009; FME, 2008; Peters, 2003).

These two sides to labelling children with disabilities reflect the dilemma of labels and the identification of learning needs in schools and classrooms (Florian, 2014a; Norwich, 2009). While this dilemma cannot be completely resolved, it should be managed in such a way that the positive ends of labelling can be focused on and utilized within the education system (Florian, 2014a). This draws attention to the need for stakeholders within the education sector to develop an understanding of inclusive education, as a system of education aimed at enhancing the learning experiences and achievements of all children within the classroom community. This can be achieved through a process that focuses on identifying and addressing barriers to learning for all children (Booth et al., 2002; UNESCO, 2005).

2.5 Inclusive education

2.5.1 Development of the concept

The international community (represented by various heads of governments from across the world) in 1990 agreed on the need to provide EFA (UNESCO, 1990). The EFA declarations made provisions for all children, focusing on various causes of marginalization such as gender, family income (poverty), ethnicity and location. Disability was also mentioned as a source of marginalization, and thus a need for education for children (and adults) with disabilities was identified. The premise for this declaration was the continued recognition and understanding of education as a human

right, as well as a means through which individuals can achieve other human rights (Florian, 2007). This assertion had its basis in the United Nations 1948 declaration of the right to education for all human beings (United Nations, 1948). The importance of education and being an educated person because of the benefits it has to the individual, as well as to the immediate community and wider society was re-emphasized.

Education was then conceptualized as a process that enhances the personal development of the individual and the development of society at large through the benefits of reducing child labour, providing solutions to social and economic problems and remedying injustice (UNESCO, 1990). This declaration became an important educational development in countries across the world. It also had an implication for the development of inclusive educational systems⁵ in countries (Miles & Singal, 2010). Although the EFA declarations enshrined the need for all to be educated it did not specify what nature of education or where such an education ought to be received. The outcome of this lack of precision meant that some children, such as those with disabilities, remained excluded within the education system and were sometimes provided with an education that differed from that received by their peers in regular schools (Florian, 1998; Winzer, 2007).

A similar approach to asserting the right to education for children with disabilities was reflected in the United Nations Standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities (United Nations, 1993). Rule 6 of this international declaration begins by emphasizing the need for education for persons with disabilities in an integrated setting. The rule goes on to explain that the governments of different countries should ensure that the education of persons with disabilities is an integral part of their education system (United Nations, 1993). This rule was replicated in the Nigerians with Disability Decree (NWDD) (NWDD, 1993). The United Nations' standard rule was a move towards acknowledging that persons with disabilities are being disadvantaged and marginalized in education systems across the world. It nonetheless

⁵ I will explain the term inclusive education in the next sub section of this chapter.

focused on the provision of access and equal opportunities rather than on the quality and the nature of the experience of children with disabilities in schools and classrooms (Peters, 2007a).

The above situation led to the World Congress on Special Needs Education, Salamanca in 1994. The outcome of this congress was the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action for special needs (UNESCO, 1994). This statement reiterated the 1990 EFA commitment, as well as emphasizing the nature of education -i.e. inclusive education- that children with disabilities should be provided with. The Salamanca declaration is particularly important to the education of children with disabilities because their educational needs were the central focus of the conference, unlike the EFA declaration, where disability was mentioned among other forms of marginalization that should be provided for in the education system as a whole (Peters, 2007a). The Salamanca statement was signed and agreed upon by 92 governments and 25 international organizations. It led firstly, to a linguistic shift globally from special education or integration to inclusive education (Vislie, 2003); and secondly, to a shift in thinking, attitudes and practice in the education of children with disabilities in schools across the world (Ainscow, 1997, 1999; Artiles, Kozleski, & Waitoller, 2011; Lipsky & Gartner, 1997).

The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (UNESCO, 1994) not only asserts the rights of children with disabilities to an education, but also add that such an education should take place in regular schools in which children with disabilities are supported to learn effectively alongside their peers. It is on the basis of this key contribution made by the Salamanca Statement that I have anchored all of the subsequent discussions and the literature review on issues that have emerged since the Salamanca Statement. The implication of the Salamanca Statement is that not only should all children with disabilities be educated but the process through which they are educated must also be accounted for. There is a new focus on abilities rather than

deficiencies, and the quality of the educational experience rather than just providing access or equal opportunities (Peters, 2007a).

2.5.2 Defining inclusive education

The term inclusive education, since its formal use in the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (UNESCO, 1994), has become not only a global descriptor for educational practices (Vislie, 2003), but also a term used by education systems across the world as a sort of currency to represent the progress of their educational systems within the international community at large (Armstrong, Armstrong, & Spandagou, 2010; Singh, 2009). The term and its translation into practice have nevertheless remained ambiguous across different contexts and at different levels of education (Ainscow, Booth, & Dyson, 2006; Mitchell, 2005; Slee, 2006, 2009). Within the debates on what inclusive education means for the education of children with disabilities, there are various perspectives.

These perspectives include, the understanding that education for children with disabilities should take place within the educational system, but not necessarily that children with disabilities should be educated in the same school or classroom as their non-disabled peers (Cigman, 2007a, 2007b; Warnock, 2010). Another perspective sees inclusive education as a system of education where children with disabilities are included in the regular system of education but are provided with special measures and support. This support must be provided as a prerequisite to access schools or classrooms (Cigman, 2007a; Low, 1997).

In yet another type of conceptualization, inclusive education is defined as a process that focuses on the presence, participation and achievement of all children in mainstream or regular schools (Booth et al., 2002). Even though the perspectives vary, there appears to be a broad agreement on the fact there is a need to provide an education for children with disabilities. The difference between these perspectives however, remains in the

extent and nature of practices that education systems, schools and classrooms should adopt in their quest to provide education for children with disabilities (Norwich, 2007).

In the context of this thesis, inclusive education is defined as a process that focuses on the presence, participation and achievement of all children in mainstream or regular schools and classrooms (Booth et al., 2002). It is this perspective that I have found useful and relevant to my understanding of inclusive education. I have therefore anchored the discussions in this thesis around this particular understating of inclusive education. Similar to Booth et al.'s (2002) perspective on inclusive education is UNESCO's (2005) definition of inclusive education. They define inclusive education as:

"...a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modification in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the regular system to educate all children". (UNESCO, 2005, p. 13)

The above definition provides an overview of the key areas of consensus that researchers within this perspective of inclusive education have emphasized. Within this line of thinking, inclusive education is understood to be a continuous struggle that is sometimes accompanied by frustrations and difficulties. It is however, a continuous struggle that is being negotiated and puzzled over in terms of how it can best be improved upon (Allan, 2008; Black-Hawkins, 2014). Based on the above conceptualization and definition there are underpinning principles that are relevant to the process of implementing inclusive education. These key principles include:

- Inclusive education should be a continuous, interconnected and never-ending process of feedback and adjustment to improve practices in regular classrooms and schools. There is not an end that is reached;
- Inclusive education should involve the identification and continuous removal of barriers to learning and achievement (these barriers include existing structures,

the nature of curriculum, attitudes, and the nature of support provided, amongst others);

- Inclusive education is about responding to the diverse learning needs of all children;
- Inclusive education is about the presence, participation and achievement of all learners; and
- Inclusive education involves taking into consideration the needs of all those children at risk of exclusion within the education system and in classrooms

(Acedo, Ferrer, & Pàmies, 2009; Ainscow, 2007; Black-Hawkins, 2014; Booth et al., 2002).

This conceptualization of inclusive education is comprehensive in how it accounts for all forms of marginalization by focusing on learning needs. It also acknowledges the continuous process of identifying and removing barriers to learning in schools and classrooms for the purpose of enhancing the participation of all children regardless of their learning needs. Additionally, it also recognizes the need for a continuous focus on possibilities and potentials in relation to the difficulties in the learning processes. This also connects to the argument that good teaching and learning in classrooms where there are children with different learning needs involves the flexible application of principles and the intensity with which these principles of teaching and learning are applied in each situation (Davis & Florian, 2004; Lewis & Norwich, 2001).

Regardless of the comprehensive nature of this conceptualization of inclusive education, it remains oblivious to the inherent contradictions in the education system regarding what schools and teachers are expected to prioritize in their daily activities in classrooms. One example of such a contradiction that is inherent in what schools are expected to do is the tension between the need to educate all children by creating inclusive schools and classrooms and the push towards ensuring that certain sets of standards are met with regard to educational achievement (Rouse & Florian, 1998; Rouse & McLaughlin, 2007).

These contradictions sometimes place conflicting expectations on what teachers and others within the school system are expected to do while responding to difficulties experienced by learners while learning (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007; Dyson, Farrell, Gallannaugh, Hutcheson, & Polat, 2004). In some instances, schools and classrooms are pushed into having to give priority to either achievement or the need to develop an inclusive system within their schools or classrooms (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007). The outcome of what is given priority to a significant extent depends on teachers' understanding of or ideas about what learning is; ideas about who takes responsibility in a learning process and how they can go about carrying out learning activities with the students in their classrooms (Jordan et al., 2010).

Regardless of these tensions and contradicting demands, teachers sometimes remain committed to certain professional values and/or individual values that define what they do; how they do it; and their intention in taking particular actions or in making decisions about teaching and learning in their classrooms (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007; Dyson & Millward, 2000; Florian & Spratt, 2013). All of these factors play a role in determining the nature of the practice developed by stakeholders within an inclusive educational setting.

2.6 Literature on inclusive education in Nigeria

The body of literature on inclusive education and/or inclusive practice⁶ available in Nigeria can be largely grouped into two strands. The first is based on documents published by the government and the second is based on research on inclusive education and/or inclusive practice.

2.6.1 Government Documents

In reviewing government publications on inclusive education and inclusive practice, I focused on documents published since the year 2004. My decision was informed by the fact that Nigeria became a signatory to the inclusive education agreement in the year 2000 when UNESCO renewed its commitment to EFA. As I have already explained the

⁶ I will discuss what inclusive practice is in chapter three.

policy on education was not revised to reflect inclusive education until 2004. A list of documents reviewed is attached to this thesis in Appendix B.

The first main theme in these reports on inclusive education is the presentation of statistics regarding children with disabilities who now have access to education, both in special and regular schools. An example is the education sector analysis carried out in 2005. This study surveyed schools in and around the Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria. It involved 540 randomly selected head teachers as its participants. Within the Federal Capital Territory there are currently 567 schools that provide basic education (this number includes both primary and junior secondary schools). This study also covered schools in the surrounding areas of the Federal Capital territory (FCT Mellienium Development Goals, 2009). The survey reported that about 40% of the regular schools surveyed had at least a child with a disability in attendance. Most of these students were reported not to be receiving any particular form of support (support in this study means having a member of support staff, also called a resource person, to support the teacher's work in the classroom) while in these regular schools and classrooms (FME, 2005).

A resource person in the Nigerian context is the same as a teacher assistants or teaching assistant as used in some of the literature. These individuals have the responsibility of assisting teachers so as to enable them to meet the learning needs of their students with disabilities. Their responsibilities are not necessarily exclusive to teaching (Giangreco, Doyle, & Suter, 2014). In most instances, they are non-teaching staff who assist teachers within a school so as to enable the school community to meet the learning needs of children with disabilities (Darden, 2009).

Commenting on such characteristics of government reports on educational developments in Nigeria, Obanya (2011) explains that educational developments such as inclusive education are represented by the figures on enrolment, numbers of children with disabilities who have gained access to schools, how much funding is provided to the education sector, and what quality and quantity of education is expected as an outcome

of the investment made. The actual reality of how these developments are evolving daily is not reflected in these reports. This scenario is not peculiar to Nigeria as it is a common trend in most developing countries. Figures on access to and funding for inclusive education are usually used as evidence of the process of inclusive practice (Akyeampong, 2002; Peters, 2003; Singal, 2009, 2014).

Akyeampong (2002) argues that in some instances these figures present a sense of progress while the actual situation on the ground is that more children are not effectively participating in classroom learning. The above argument links back to Norwich's (2014) argument, stated earlier, of how labels are used as sources of resource allocation and for administrative purposes. The tendency then Norwich adds is to ignore other aspects of developments because of the focus on the use of labels for the benefit of the education system rather than the children that it intends to serve.

A second theme in these government publications is the statements that represent some level of progress but remain vague about what exactly the practice of inclusive education looks like in schools and classrooms. An example is the National Report of Nigeria, presented by the Federal Ministry of Education at Geneva during the 48th international conference on education 2008.⁷ In discussing the education of children with disabilities, the report only states that education for children with disabilities “*has continued with appreciable though modest success*” (FME, 2008:p.32). The exact nature of this ‘modest success’ is not discussed further apart from the provision of infrastructure and instructional materials for special education schools and funds for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other private education providers because of the key roles they play in educating children with disabilities. The only detail provided by this report is the statistics on children with disabilities who have access to education.

Most of these documents discuss inclusive education with a focus on other causes of marginalization such as gender and nomadism. Where disability is mentioned the details remain at a peripheral level when compared to how other forms of marginalization are

⁷ The conference was organised by UNESCO and it had the theme, inclusive education: the way of the future.

discussed. This pattern has been highlighted by other educationists such as Ojile (2012) within Nigeria. However, this problem is not only associated with efforts towards education for all children in Nigeria. The status of education for children with disabilities is often less focused upon in international mainstream efforts, discourses, planning and agendas towards education for all children (Grech, 2009; Miles & Singal, 2010). Such reports, Miles and Singal (2010) state, do not engage in great depth with the educational process for children with disabilities. This lack of proper engagement continues to exist within the broader body of literature despite the fact that children with disabilities are one of the largest groups of marginalized children to be systematically excluded from regular education (Rieser, 2005).

3.6.2 Research on inclusive education in Nigeria

Research on inclusive education has also been carried out in Nigeria. These studies have explored issues around the implementation of inclusive education and the focus of these studies is most often teachers' (sometimes including head teachers') attitudes and readiness for inclusive practice. Both positive and negative attitudes have emerged from these studies. Eberechukwu (2012a, 2012b) surveyed 99 teachers and 42 head teachers to determine their attitudes in the two different studies that he carried out. Obiweluzo (2009) and Jude (2007) also surveyed regular classroom teachers on their readiness for and attitude towards inclusive education. While Jude was silent about the actual sample size, Obiweluzo (2009) had 87 teachers participating in his study. These studies employed the use of questionnaires for data generation and both reached the same conclusion: Nigerian teachers lacked the readiness for and had negative attitudes towards inclusive practice. However, other studies that have also used questionnaires have reported positive attitudes towards inclusive practice among teachers.

Chukuka (2012) surveyed 120 regular school teachers in western Nigeria. His study found that teachers had positive attitudes towards inclusive practice. His participants also expressed how they had extended their practice by using varied methods of instruction in their classrooms. His conclusion was that teachers in some Nigerian

classrooms are ready to implement inclusive practice. The location of Chukuka's (2012) study was one of the western states in Nigeria. His findings might have been influenced by the location of the study (which is different from where the other studies were carried out). Moreover, the proximity to the teacher education college where most participants might have been trained in or the prevalent cultural practices and beliefs in that part of the country, might have influenced his findings. I have explained some of the cultural practices prevalent in different parts of Nigeria. These might have been factors that influenced Chukuka's (2012) findings.

A few studies have focused on other issues such as the challenges of inclusive practice and opportunities for inclusive practice in Nigeria. In their study Unachukwu, Ozoji, and Ifelunni (2008) surveyed teachers to explore their practice, and their existing knowledge and/or understanding, of inclusive education. Their findings however, focused on the challenges of implementing inclusive education and factors that can enhance its implementation in Nigeria. This mismatch between their research intention and the findings reported I believe is a reflection of their use of questionnaires in order to understand teachers' knowledge and understanding. Exploring teachers' knowledge and understanding can be more effectively explored through an in-depth engagement with data that is qualitative in nature. Qualitative data enables researchers to explore a social phenomenon by generating data that allows research participants to express themselves in words. This enables a richer understanding of the knowledge held by people (Bryman, 2012).

In a similar vein, Dommak (2012) surveyed some schools in one of the central state in Nigeria. His research aim was to evaluate the nature of inclusive practice being implemented in the schools he surveyed. His survey of the schools and his reported observations can be compared to having a checklist that acknowledges the presence and absence of certain types of services, and the nature of the provision for children with disabilities. While these studies have yielded useful information, they do not capture the process of how practice can evolve over time. Inclusive education, as defined earlier, is a

continuous process that leads to addressing negative attitudes towards, and barriers to practice to, better practice (Acedo et al., 2009; Ainscow, 2007; UNESCO, 2005)

Researchers in the field of inclusive practice in Nigeria are yet to raise questions such as: if teachers do express a lack of readiness and a negative attitude, what is the current fate of those children with disabilities who are currently included in regular schools and classrooms? How are the learning needs of children with disabilities met within the prevailing attitude? How does this attitude or lack of readiness influence practice? These sorts of questions are explored through methods that generate qualitative data rather than against data that represents practice with numbers or as a kind of checklist that indicates the presence or absence of children with disabilities in schools and classrooms. Understanding the development of inclusive practice goes beyond a focus on the factors related to the development of inclusive practice to also focusing on how these different aspects of practice interrelate and influence each other (Rouse, 2007). This gap in the literature and understanding of how inclusive practice can be developed in Nigerian classrooms is what has drawn me to researching teachers' developing inclusive classroom practice.

Moreover, it can be argued that there is an underlying implied assumption reflected in this body of literature on the development of inclusive education in Nigeria. This assumption is that inclusive education can be implemented in specified stages rather than being a continuous and never ending process (Black-Hawkins, 2014; Booth et al., 2002). An example of this assumption is reflected in Ojile's (2012) article. In this article, Ojile (2012) proposed different phases of implementing inclusive education in Nigeria. These phases are: the identification and removal of all potential and actual barriers to the implementation of inclusive education; changes in the establishment of the required infrastructure; and finally, the phase of actual implementation. This assumption has often been implied implicitly in the recommendations made in various research papers published in Nigeria.

These suggested stages are all relevant but they need to be seen as a continuous process rather than discrete phases. Changing attitudes and altering stereotypes is a gradual and long-term process rather than a one off change (Artiles, Kozleski, Dorn, & Christensen, 2007). Practitioners in the education system need to reflect continuously on what is known, what is done and the assumptions that underpin practice. In developing practice, there is a place for continuously asking why, what and how all of these influence what is ongoing in classrooms with regards to the learning and achievement of children in the classroom community (Black-Hawkins, 2014).

Additionally, a different underlying assumption embedded in these studies is that if there is a positive attitude it will directly translate into readiness and willingness to practice and vice versa. However, teachers' attitudes have been found to be related to other factors such as the nature of a disability, gender, age and years of experience rather than being directly related to the concept and idea of inclusive education (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Giangreco, Dennis, Cloninger, Edelman, & Schattman, 1993; Kuyini & Desai, 2006; Peters, 2003). A more recent study has also indicated that teachers might have a positive attitude towards the philosophy of inclusive practice, but they remain reluctant to engage in its practice (Savolainen, Engelbrecht, Nel, & Malinen, 2012). Thus having positive attitudes alone does not necessarily translate into readiness or willingness to practice.

This chapter has provided background information on the research context. In the next chapter, a discussion on inclusive practice and the theoretical ideas that informed this research will be presented.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

In chapter two, I stated how inclusive education is defined and explained from different perspectives. The lack of consensus on what inclusive education is has influenced the nature of what is provided, which in turn has led to variations in practice in classrooms and schools and across national contexts (Artiles & Dyson, 2005; Artiles et al., 2007; Artiles et al., 2011; Mitchell, 2005; Slee, 2006, 2009). The implication of these varied perspectives in the theoretical conceptualization of inclusive education is the challenge of the development of inclusive classroom practice that is inclusive of all children (Florian & Spratt, 2013).

In this chapter, I review the literature relevant to inclusive practice on the basis of how I have conceptualized inclusive education in this thesis. The purpose of this literature review is to explain the theoretical underpinning that informed this research and within which the research process was situated. Doing this will make clear the underlying structure of this thesis in such a way that I, as well as other readers, become aware of the stance and orientations that supported and informed the research process (Maxwell, 2005; Merriam, 2009).

This chapter is divided into six main sections. In Section 3.2 I define and explain inclusive classroom practice. Within this section, I also explain the nature of teaching and learning activities that facilitate inclusive classroom practice. This section is followed by a discussion of previous research on inclusive classroom practice in Section 3.3. Afterwards, the principles that underpin the development of inclusive classroom practice are explained in Section 3.4. The framework for participation (Black-Hawkins, 2014; Black-Hawkins, 2010), which is the methodological tool that I used as a theoretical framework in this research, is introduced and explained in Section 3.5. In the

final section of this chapter, I explain the research aim and questions in the context of the literature that has been reviewed.

3.2 Inclusive classroom practice

Inclusive classroom practice is the things that teachers and all those within the classroom do to ensure that all of the children within a classroom are enabled to participate, learn and make progress in the classroom teaching and learning that takes place (Florian, 2009). The ‘things’ referred to in the above definition comprise those actions and activities that all members of the classroom community undertake, and consider, as part of the process of including children with disabilities in regular classrooms (Rose, 1998). These actions and activities might mean different things to different teachers who practise or researchers who are researching inclusive classroom practice because perspectives are often linked to the conceptualization and understanding of what inclusive education is for those involved (Norwich, 2013).

Following on from how inclusive education has being conceptualized in this research, the actions that comprise inclusive classroom practice include: the process of arranging elements of learning and mobilizing resources in order to achieve the desired end of providing opportunities for all children to participate in learning activities geared towards their needs (Rose, 1998). The provision of learning opportunities for all children in classroom communities allows these children to develop their potential, as well as giving them equal opportunities to participate as members of their immediate and/or wider community, regardless of whether or not they have a disability (Booth et al., 2002; Rose, 1998; UNESCO, 2000).

Inclusive practice, Florian (2007) argues, requires a shift in thinking from the previous forms of provision, whereby there is a provision for most and particular provision for some, to a provision based on an extension of what is ordinarily available for all in classroom learning or activities. This, Florian (2007) adds, requires a focus on *all* learners together and not on the *differences* between learners. Focusing on the learning experiences of all demands that learning in inclusive classrooms becomes a process in

which an emphasis is placed on how children engage with learning activities, how they respond to these teaching and learning activities, and how they all develop the knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum (Kershner, 2009). Approaching learning and teaching in such a manner prioritizes sharing knowledge in the classroom community and the different forms of communication that take place between teachers and students in the classroom environment (Kershner, 2009; Sfard, 1998). Inclusive teaching and learning draws from the understanding that learning is an outcome or a product of interactions and it is the nature of these interactions that actually determines the learning and achievement that takes place (Alexander, 2008; Koschmann, 1999).

3.2.1 Learning in inclusive classrooms

Varied views and understandings of learning circulate in different education systems, schools and classrooms (Watkins, Carnell, Lodge, Wagner, & Whalley, 2002). For each understanding of what learning is there are assumptions that underpin it and subsequently implications for how learning might be managed and assessed (Watkins, 2005). In inclusive classrooms, where priority is given to the learning experiences of all, the kind of learning process engaged with is that through which knowledge is built by doing things with others (Watkins, 2005). It is not just about the teacher, nor is it all about the student alone constructing knowledge; it is about striking a balance between the parties involved in the learning process (Rogoff, 1994).

The underlying assumption here is that children are interested in gaining knowledge from those around them, especially from a more experienced partner because of their natural inclination to imitate others (Claxton, 2007; Rogoff, 1999). Watkins et al. (2002) explain that learning is effective when the learner is active (in whatever way) and is able to draw from previous experience by connecting it to their present and future experiences (which is often not linear). They also state that learning is influenced by the use that it will have in the future. The learner learns in collaboration with others in the learning environment; the teacher facilitates and guides this process; and, the measure of progress in this instance cannot be measured precisely by predicted or fixed outcomes.

Learning within this context does not take place in logical and clear stages, but is weaved into activities that can sometimes be uncertain (Claxton, 2007). In her argument, Linklater (2010) explains that teaching and learning comprise a multiplicity of unpredictable opportunities that can be effectively utilized so as to provide ample possibilities for learning and progress for all children. This approach to learning in classrooms reflects a process that acknowledges the aim of firstly, ensuring that all children's rights to education, rights in education and rights through education are secured (Singal, 2014); and secondly, developing a process through which a child develops as an individual and becomes part of their immediate and wider community through their participation in that community (Robeyns, 2006; Sfard, 1998; Tomasevski, 2003).

Moreover, learning in inclusive classrooms is based on the notion of a process that emphasizes the bi-directional interaction of individuals in their environment and with others around them. This leads to a change that takes place in these relationships over time (de Valenzuela, 2007). It also implies a process whereby participation (i.e. becoming a respected and practising participant among other participants, in ways that the participants are able to change over time because of the practice that they are a part of) is the focus (Lave, 1996). In becoming a member, the individual needs to have a sense of belonging in that the focus of what is provided is on what is common for all of the members of the classroom community rather than on what is different about individuals in the classrooms (Booth, 2003). It is important that learners do not just make progress in their learning but that the emotions and feelings that the process evokes are also taken into account (O'Hanlon, 2000). This aspect of learning links directly to an important aspect of inclusive classroom practice.

The ability to develop and implement an inclusive classroom practice, springs from the understanding or premise that diversity is a strength and individuals are accepted for who they are as members of the classroom community regardless of an identified disability (Florian, 1998; Miles & Ainscow, 2010). Inclusive practice begins with the

acceptance and valuing of the existence of differences and not denying or ignoring them. This serves as the hallmark of practice, in which creative ways of dealing with diversity and differences are continuously being sought (Florian, 1998, 2010; Thomas & Loxley, 2001). Therefore, accepting all children as part of the classroom community and creating ways to enhance their learning experience in the same classroom as their peers does not mean a denial of individual differences.

It does mean, however, that the focus remains on emphasizing acceptance and the need to value individual differences as part of the daily existence in classrooms (Booth, 2003; Florian, 2010). This is then accompanied by creatively developing ways to personalize learning and yet still engaging with each child within the class (Ainscow, 1999). The emphasis here lies on how stakeholders (teachers, school staff and others in the school system) conceptualize difference and how the notion of difference inspires the creativity that leads to meaningful encounters in learning (Ainscow, 1999; Ainscow & Miles, 2008; Miles & Ainscow, 2010). Essentially, there is a recognition of individual learning needs and that these needs are met in such a manner that the individual is not undermined as a valued member of the classroom community with the same rights as his/her peers.

These main principles that inform inclusive practice are mostly situated and developed from teachers' knowledge about themselves as teachers; knowledge about the psychology of how learning takes place; knowledge of curriculum areas as well as general teaching strategies; and knowledge as it relates to disability (Norwich & Lewis, 2007). All of these factors are interrelated and this makes the process complex in that it is difficult to identify each factor as a separate entity. In some instances, an understanding of these various aspects of teaching develops with years of experience, or based on the personal understanding of teachers. In other instances, it can be shaped through training prior to becoming a teacher or development training as a teacher (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Florian & Spratt, 2013).

While all of these four aspects of knowledge are part of the complexity of what teachers deal with and manage in their daily work (Davis & Sumara, 1999), the main challenge in developing inclusive practice is that teachers often use their knowledge of disability to filter through the other aspects of knowledge that they have. The consequence of this is that they undermine their ability to teach children with disabilities (Norwich & Lewis, 2007; Rix & Sheehy, 2014). Therefore, teachers' inclusive practices can be enhanced if there is an understanding of how their current practices (and other already existing knowledge) can influence (both positively and negatively) learning for all children (Rix & Sheehy, 2014). Basically, inclusive practice is a strategic process that focuses centrally on supporting the process of children's learning, motivation and social interaction, rather than primarily on identifying special needs, differentiating work or providing additional resources and support (Florian & Kershner, 2009). This in turn demands an understanding of teaching practices that can enhance the above process of learning.

3.2.2 Teaching practices

'Good teaching practices', according to Claxton (2009), cannot be identified unless there is clarity about the purpose for which children are being educated. Claxton's (2009) assertion, I will argue, is justifiable, especially if teaching is to be understood across and within different contexts as a process of using a particular method to enable students to learn a particular subject matter (Alexander, 2001). In reducing teaching to this barest essential, Alexander (2001) points to two questions that must immediately be addressed. These questions are: what are students expected to learn? And what method should a teacher use to ensure that the children in their classroom learn what they are expected to learn? On this basis I will refer back to the purpose for which inclusive practice was advocated for by UNESCO, both in its initial statement on Education For All (UNESCO, 1990) and in its recommitment to an inclusive education for all children, in the year 2000 (UNESCO, 2000).

Within these declarations, the purpose of education is not only to develop an individual to the fullest of their potential, but also to ensure that everyone having an education is able to develop the necessary skills required to lead the kind of life they aspire to. It is at its barest minimum about developing in children what is necessary for livelihood after being educated (UNESCO, 2000).

At its basic level education is about expanding the capacity of an individual to continue learning (Claxton, 2009). Besides this purpose of educating all children, there is also a reflection of how, or the process through which, this education should be carried out in UNESCO's statements, especially in its second statement. This process is one that allows for children to learn *to be* and *to live together* (UNESCO, 2000). Thus it is not just about learning what is needed but that this learning is done in a particular way that accounts for both what is being learnt and how it is learnt (Claxton, 2007, 2009). The aim is to strike a balance between individual development and progress (i.e. the what), as well as participating in the classroom community with learners disposed towards continuous learning (i.e. the how) (Claxton, 2007; Sfard, 1998). In this regard, I have guided the discussion in this section on the understanding that effective teaching (or teaching at its best) is about what teachers do that not only enables students to learn but also actively strengthens their capacity to learn alongside their peers (Hargreaves, 2004).

In this context, teachers have a responsibility, not only for ensuring the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding, but also for creating a climate in which the feeling of enablement and entitlement to learn is systematically broadened and strengthened (Claxton, 2007; Hargreaves, 2004). The implication of this process, Kershner (2009) explains, is that children's educational needs and progress are assessed in relation to how they are able to contribute to classroom conversations and knowledge building, employ and use the resources in the classroom, and engage with different ways of communicating with all those in the classroom. The role of the teacher in this instance is not only that of a facilitator, whose responsibility is to facilitate and enhance the processes and communication in learning (Davis & Florian, 2004), but also that of an

individual who is also learning and developing through the process (Kershner, 2009; Rogoff, 1994).

Learning is shared by all and through this shared process the individuals involved (i.e. both adults and students) become transformed into becoming members of the community of learners (Lave, 1996; Rogoff, 1994). Through their growing involvement in varied tasks and by taking on different responsibilities, they all gain access to sources that enables them to develop the understanding, which in turn leads to the learning that takes place. In teaching of this nature the whole person is involved in a process that engages their intentions to learn and the meaning of learning is allowed to evolve through a process in which individual students becomes full participants in the teaching and learning process (Lave & Wenger, 1999). What this position is basically pointing towards is that students might do well if the learning process focuses only on them and they are allowed to learn in unaided ways. Nevertheless, teaching practices that bring adult support into the process allow learning to be more effective and efficient (Hargreaves, 2004).

Critics of this perspective on effective teaching have argued that placing social process at the centre of learning activities might eclipse the individual needs of the child (Leach & Moon, 2008), especially if the child has a disability or is vulnerable (Pirrie & Head, 2007). However, in the real sense of participation (i.e. the social approach to learning theory) a focus on social practice requires a very explicit focus on the individual learner, not only as a person in the world (and not in a world of their own), but also a member of various socio-cultural communities. In this sense, learning takes place when the individual is actively or intensively engaged in activities with others. But if the person is deliberately kept out, or decides not to be engaged with in the activity, this person remains on the margins of that particular social group, and that inhibits learning in such a setting (Leach & Moon, 2008).

In creating a community of learners, learning from each other is a basic principle that both adults and children inculcate into their daily routines and interactions. No one has an absolute monopoly of knowledge or expertise and the boundaries between who is perceived as more superior are minimized (Kershner, 2009; Rogoff, 1994). Students (or children) in this situation, are able to coordinate with other children and the adult(s) in the class, not only in how they make contributions to the overall orientation and leadership provided by the adults, but also with a certain degree of leadership being provided by the students (children) who are involved at some point as the learning process progresses (Leach & Moon, 2008; Rogoff, 1994). In other words, this goes beyond pupils offering their contributions and perspectives to learning, to allowing students to be able to challenge the status quo and contribute and remain active in decisions throughout the process in which they are taught (Alexander, 2006, 2014; Woodhead, 2010).

Effective teaching practices enable students to learn the information as they collaborate with one another and with the adults in carrying out activities (Rogoff, 1994). In explaining the social nature of interactions in teaching practices, Rogoff (1999) explains that social interaction becomes more beneficial when there is an engagement of an adult in a manner that guidance is provided to the children concerned so that they can participate in ways that extend their perceived abilities. It is then that they are able to internalize the practice from these activities. This internalization of practice, Rogoff, Paradise, Arauz, Correa-Chávez, and Angelillo (2003) add, leads to the necessary transformation that enhances the ability of all to contribute to the learning community's endeavours, evolve in their level of responsibility and possibly, assume leadership roles for subsequent endeavours.

I have highlighted three main points in the above discussions on effective teaching. They are: firstly, that there is a focus on developing the capacity to learn; secondly, that both the children and the adults involved have roles that are relevant and that they must all be equally engaged in the process of learning; and lastly, that such learning takes place through a process of participation for both the adults and students (i.e. the children

involved). These three aspects of effective teaching together form the act of teaching and the discourse that surrounds and sustains teaching (Alexander, 2001, 2004).

In his conceptualization, Alexander (1996, 2001) depicts the act of teaching as comprising tasks, activities, interactions and judgements. These components of the act of teaching are a reflection of the various domains of teaching. Alexander (2004) identifies the domains of teaching as comprising teachers' understanding of teaching, the children in their classrooms and what is to be learnt (i.e. the curriculum). Teachers, he adds, interact with these in their daily practice. These domains make up the components that inform the acts of teaching and how teachers focus on developing the capacity to learn. The teaching and learning aspects of these domains are covered in how both the adults and children in classrooms become engaged with various classroom activities, the manner in which the process of engagement is structured, and the roles that they all assume through the process of teaching and learning. They comprise the other aspect of interactions and judgements, as well as the tasks and activities aspect of teaching (Alexander, 2001).

Following the above discussions on teaching and what ideas inform and make teaching effective, it can be argued that an effective teacher is one who not only commands a deep understanding of what is to be taught and its structure, but also has a thorough understanding of the type of teaching activities that can help students learn and remain curious enough to want to learn more (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000). This makes teaching a complex activity that cannot be separated clearly and neatly into various components (Davis & Sumara, 1999). Part of this complexity lies in the difficulty in distinguishing and discussing teaching without associating it closely with learning.

3.2.3 Effective teaching practices in developing countries

Arguments within the literature on effective teaching have raised the question about ideas that are grounded in developed countries (Sikoyo, 2010; Singal & Muthukrishna, 2014). Such questions have asked whether such practices can be applied and implemented in developing countries where the situations in classrooms and the context

of practice vary (Singal, 2014; Singal, Jeffery, Jain, & Sood, 2011; Singal & Muthukrishna, 2014). Some general arguments against the above approach to teaching and learning, in which children are accorded active roles in learning, exist in the literature. Most of these arguments have been raised by researchers writing in developing countries. The basis of these arguments is that firstly, in most developing contexts the nature of class sizes (which is between 40 – 60 students) does not allow for such active engagement with all children (Altinyelken, 2010; Hardman, Abd-Kadir, & Smith, 2008; Sikoyo, 2010). Secondly, these researchers have also pointed to the fact that in developing contexts, especially in African countries, adults are seen as a symbol of authority and therefore, they will continue to remain the focus of teaching and learning in classrooms (Altinyelken, 2010; Schweisfurth, 2011).

In a recent systematic review of research evidence on effective teaching practices in developing contexts, Westbrook et al. (2013) conclude that teachers' use of communicative strategies encourages teaching practices that are interactive in nature, and more likely to impact on the learning outcomes regardless of classrooms situations. The communicative strategies identified by Westbrook et al. (2013) were the outcome of their interpretation of the various strategies identified in previous qualitative research on teachers' classroom practices in different developing country contexts. These varied research outcomes, they add, were a reflection of what is possible in developing contexts where conditions are difficult, the classes are large, learning needs vary and there are a variety of combinations of different forms of marginalization or a wider range of needs to be met with scarce resources.

Teachers in these contexts, according to Westbrook et al. (2013), develop their practice based on an interaction of their thinking or attitudes with what they do in their classrooms and what they see as the outcome of what they do in their practice. Teachers' thinking and attitudes that were found to have influenced their practices were a positive attitude towards their students and their training. Those teachers who were reported to have positive attitudes in these aspects of their work had the right frame of mind, which enabled them to use teaching and learning strategies that were interactive and

communicative in nature. These interactive and communicative strategies involved engaging their students in ways in which there was an indication that some sort of learning was taking place (Westbrook et al., 2013). These are all reflections of how the different domains of teaching identified by Alexander (2004) can interrelate or interact with each other to influence teachers' classroom practice.

Three particularly effective teaching strategies were identified by Westbrook et al. (2013):

- Use of feedback and sustained attention;
- Creating a safe environment in which students are supported in their learning;
- Drawing on students' background and experiences.

These strategies in turn were found to have informed the teaching practices developed by the teachers in the review. Examples of such practices included:

- Flexible use of whole-class, group and pair work where students discussed a shared task;
- Frequent and relevant use of learning materials beyond the textbook
- Open and closed questioning, expanding responses, encouraging student questioning;
- Demonstration and explanation, drawing on sound pedagogical content knowledge;
- Use of local languages and code switches;
- Planning and varying lesson sequence.

The effectiveness of any of these practices, Westbrook et al. (2013) argue, remains primarily rooted in how teachers are able to practise in a communicative way that enables them to pay attention to their students by placing them at the centre of the teaching and learning process so that they can be engaged, and they can understand, participate and learn. It can be argued, based on the outcome of Westbrook et al.'s

(2013) research on effective teaching practices in developing contexts, that the principles that underpin effective teaching practices extend across contexts.

Referring back to my earlier discussions in this section, teaching becomes effective when the focus remains on enabling students to learn and become active learners in their own right; there is an emphasis on enfranchising learners to become interested in exploring and learning more; and their previous experiences and knowledge are utilized in such a manner that they are able to draw on them, connect to the present, and possibly transfer it into future learning endeavours (Claxton, 2007, 2009; Watkins et al., 2002). I believe that this is also reflected in Westbrook et al.'s (2013) findings on effective teaching strategies and practices in developing contexts. This connects back to the arguments about whether effective teaching is effective across contexts. Here, I argue that the basic factor that determines teaching practices and the nature of learning taking place in the classroom is significantly influenced by the teacher's understanding of what learning is, how learning can be made possible, who can learn and achieve, and her/his role in the process of teaching and learning (Alexander, 2004; Freire, 2000; Kershner, 2009; Rogoff, 1994; Rouse, 2008; Westbrook et al., 2013).

Therefore, while these arguments on the varied nature of effective teaching across contexts are important to the literature on the development of teaching practices, there is also a need for a shift in focus towards exploring how teachers in contexts in which there are more challenges are able to be effective in teaching and learning in spite of the conditions in which they find themselves rather than because of the context (Barrett, 2007; Singal, 2014; Westbrook et al., 2013). Teachers develop practices because of the situation and circumstances in which they find themselves and this practice is significantly shaped by the purposes that they prioritize (Brown & McIntyre, 1993; Hatch, White, & Capitelli, 2005). The emphasis needs to reflect an engagement with those who have made some progress towards practice in order to identify areas for possible further development (Peters, 2007b).

This section has discussed and provided the basis for what effective teaching is. Inclusive classroom practice has its basis in general effective classroom teaching (Jordan et al., 2010; Rix & Sheehy, 2014). It has also indicated how the development of classroom practice comprises more than one element or aspect of teaching. It is a reflection of how teaching needs to be understood as a holistic action that is enabled and sustained by several factors and ideas (Davis & Sumara, 1999). Effective teaching is extended to become inclusive of all children regardless of the learning needs they might have as a result of a disability (Florian, 2007, 2010; Jordan et al., 2010; Rix & Sheehy, 2014; Sheehy et al., 2009). In the section below, I review some of the studies carried out on inclusive classroom practice.

3.3 Research on inclusive classroom practice

Various studies on teachers' inclusive classroom practices have been carried out over the years. In a review of previous research work in the field, Artiles et al. (2007) reviewed classroom practice based research. Even though they are not precise about the number of studies included in their review and the criteria that they used in selecting these studies (Göransson & Nilholm, 2014), they conclude that most classroom based studies focused on the processes of instruction that provided specific outcomes as designated by the researchers. These, they add, often included a focus on specific teaching strategies that are useful in enhancing the acquisition and transfer of knowledge in specific subjects or enhancing the development of specific skills in students.

Research on teachers' practices was thus underpinned by the assumption that if these strategies were clearly identified, all teachers could learn them and put them into practice in their classrooms and that these learning could be measured only in terms of knowledge and skills acquisition (Artiles et al., 2007). This approach to researching inclusive practice has a tendency to further sustain the inclusive education and achievement debate (with achievement being narrowly defined as test scores) on whether the two can really co-exist (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007; Dyson et al., 2004). Artiles et al. (2007) state that there is paucity of research that focuses on how teachers

and the students in their classrooms negotiate the complex nature of daily classroom interactions.

Although this review has been heavily criticized for the inconsistent criteria used to identify the studies reviewed and in the inconsistencies embedded in their definition of inclusive practice (see Göransson and Nilholm (2014)), a similar conclusion was also reached by Göransson and Nilholm (2014). In their review, Göransson and Nilholm (2014) reviewed 20 studies on inclusive practice dated between 2002 and 2011. They conclude that there is still a continued absence of clarity in research reports with regard to how inclusive practice is conceptualized.

Other researchers have carried out systematic reviews of research on teachers' inclusive classroom practice with the aim of bringing together the evidence on teachers' inclusive classroom practice and possibly identifying those practices that have been reported as effective for the inclusion of children with disabilities in regular classrooms. Some of these reviews have focused on teachers' inclusive practices in general [Rix, Hall, Nind, Sheehy, and Wearmouth (2006), Sheehy et al. (2009) and Nind et al. (2004) for instance], while others, such as Harrower and Dunlap (2001) and Crosland and Dunlap (2012), have focused on practices that enables the inclusion of children with specific types of disabilities.

Nind et al. (2004) reviewed previous research in order to address the question of what kind of pedagogic approaches teachers use to effectively include children with disabilities in regular classrooms. Even though they started with the broad question above, they narrowed down their focus to a peer-group interactive approach in the sub-questions raised. Their sub-questions focused on determining firstly, if peer-group interactive approaches enhance the inclusion and achievement of students with disabilities in classrooms and secondly, how teachers used such a strategy to enhance the inclusion of children with disabilities.

This review was carried out in three different phases with a varied focus for each stage. This starting point is an example of what Artiles et al. (2007) criticise with regard to

research on teachers' practice an underpinning assumption in the research that if the most effective method is identified then all other teachers can focus on the use of that method. While some methods, such as peer-group interaction can easily create the opportunity for an interactive teaching session in classrooms, their use does not necessarily guarantee the inclusion of children with disabilities in classroom learning. The effectiveness of a strategy is determined by the manner in which the classroom activity is actually structured and carried out (i.e. the how and not the what) (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011). This theme is reflected in chapter six, where I provide examples of teachers' classroom practices and compare them. Nind et al. (2004) conclude that the use of peer-group interactive approaches can be effective in ensuring that children with disabilities learn alongside their peers in regular classrooms. However, they add a note of caution and acknowledge how limited their evidence base was.

In a follow-up review, Rix et al. (2006) focused on previous research on teachers' practices with regard to the nature of the interactions between students, teachers and support staff in classrooms. In this review, they focused on the type of interactions that reported positive outcomes in the academic and social inclusion of students with disabilities in regular schools. One of the common themes identified by Rix et al. (2006) is the significant role teachers play in shaping interactions and influencing learning opportunities through these interactions. Teachers' positive attitudes towards the inclusion of children with disabilities, they add, reflects the quality of interactions in classrooms and in turn influences students' self-concepts. Teachers' interactions in classrooms that were most effective in enhancing social and academic outcomes were those that focused on thinking and reasoning through the on-going task with all of the children in the classroom.

This often surfaced when the teacher saw themselves as primarily responsible for the learning of a child with a disability in their classroom (Rix et al., 2006). Classroom interactions and the process through which all children are seen as participants who are able to draw from their previous experiences, present experiences, and abilities, as well as take active roles in the process of teaching and learning, is a theme that I have already

discussed at length in this chapter. I will discuss this further in the findings presented in chapter six of this thesis.

The third aspect of the reviews by this group of researchers (i.e. Sheehy et al. (2009); Nind et al. (2004); Rix et al. (2006)) focused on exploring whether whole class, subject based teaching is effective for the social and academic inclusion of children with disabilities. The main themes emerging from the third review by Sheehy et al. (2009) is the mediating role of the teacher in the pedagogic community in negotiating practice (both within and outside the school). This negotiation, Sheehy et al. (2009) add, is influenced by the model of how children learn, which is shared in the practice community. It allows teachers to not only depend on the knowledge of the curriculum that they have to teach, but also on why they have to teach and learn that. Again learners' social engagement in the learning process with the purpose of enhancing their knowledge development is a theme that runs through their findings. Also important is the identification of the fact that these varied interactions are embedded in different modes of activities. In all of these reviews, the authors acknowledge that the research were focused on children between the ages of 7 and 14 and that the research included was carried out mostly in the United States.

In drawing a conclusion on the basis of the findings from this series of reviews, Rix, Hall, Nind, Sheehy, and Wearmouth (2009) explain:

“...this series of reviews should encourage teachers to recognize that within the complexities of diverse mainstream classrooms, their effectiveness will be dependent upon their own understanding of their role, their facility to adapt their teaching and curriculum and their willingness and ability to encourage participation in a communal learning experience through flexible groupings and roles. Pedagogic approaches that effectively include children with special educational needs [i.e. children with disabilities] in mainstream classrooms are not based on the teacher alone, but are rooted in the community of learners -including other practitioners- with whom they work” (Rix et al., 2009, pp. 92 - 93).

Their conclusion reflects some of the themes that I have already highlighted in the previous sections. Some of these include: the roles of teachers and students in classrooms while teaching and learning is ongoing; and, the need for teachers to adapt

their strategies in specific ways and yet remain flexible in their practices. Other aspects include working with other professionals. These themes are further discussed alongside the principles of inclusive classroom practice in the next section of this chapter and later on in chapter six of this thesis.

A different body of literature in the field of inclusive classroom practice is based on research carried out in the Canadian context. These studies have spanned over some years and have focused on examining the relationship between elementary regular classroom teachers' general beliefs about disability and ability, their roles in inclusive classrooms, and how these are related to their teaching practices in classrooms (Jordan et al., 2010).

In an earlier study, Jordan and Stanovich (2003) researched how teachers' epistemological beliefs on knowledge and how knowledge is learned influenced their classroom practice. Their approach to understanding this relationship was through inferring teachers' beliefs (through the use of interview narratives) on the basis of how these teachers described their work with regard to children with disabilities. They then related these teachers' espoused beliefs to their instructional practices in classrooms. This relationship, they indicate, holds with instructional interactions, and predicts instructional practices in classrooms for children with or without disabilities. In their conclusion they speculate that a teacher's wider beliefs about knowledge and how it is learned are related to the beliefs a teacher has about students with disabilities. This, Jordan and Stanovich (2003) add, is also significantly influenced by the prevailing beliefs about a teacher's role and responsibilities with regard to students with disabilities in the wider school context in which the teacher is.

Writing about their research work spanning over a decade, Jordan, Schwartz, and McGhie-Richmond (2009) explain how the findings from their research indicate that teachers' beliefs about the nature of disabilities and their roles and responsibilities in the education of children with disabilities in part influence their ability to develop practice that is effective as well as inclusive of all children. This theme, situated within the work

of this group of researchers, is a reflection of how research and development in the UK has reflected the need to understand teachers' practices in terms of their knowledge of practice, their beliefs about practice and their roles in practice, and what they actually do in practice (Rouse, 2007, 2008). These aspects of practice will be discussed further in chapter seven where I discuss how teachers' knowledge, beliefs and actions interrelate in the nature of the practice that they are implementing. Jordan et al's (2009) study further reasserts some of the arguments in the literature on inclusive practice with regard to it being an extension of effective teaching practice with the purpose of reaching out to all children. I have already elaborated on this theme in this chapter.

In extending and responding to this body of research and this approach to researching inclusive classroom practice, Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) have proposed an alternative approach to understanding inclusive classroom practice. In order to formulate this approach, Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) have drawn from past research evidence and developed three main principles that they have identified as key to the development of inclusive classroom practice. They justify this approach on the basis of Alexander's (Alexander, 2001, 2004) work, in which he explains that teaching can only be understood if the discourse that surrounds it is also explored. Previous literature on teachers' development of inclusive practice has already reflected the interactions between the different elements of inclusive classroom practice. In explaining this interrelationship, Rouse (2007, 2008) states that inclusive practice depends on teachers knowing (about theoretical, policy, legislative issues, and teaching strategies), believing (in their capacity to support all children and make an impact on the learning experience of all children), and doing (turning their knowledge, beliefs and assumptions into action). In his argument, Rouse (2007, 2008) adds that neither one of these is sufficient to develop practice but a combination of at least two will lead to the development of the third in due course, a balance that is necessary for inclusive practice to become a reality in classrooms. Rouse's argument resonates with the idea that teachers' beliefs about ability, disability, the nature of knowledge and how learning is accomplished, and their beliefs about their roles and responsibilities in relation to teaching all children are not

only related, but also influence how they teach. More importantly, this affects how effective teachers can be in reaching their students, whether or not they have a disability (Jordan et al., 2009).

On these grounds, Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) focused their research on exploring and bringing together evidence on what teachers know, do and believe (an idea based on Rouse's (2007, 2008) work). This decision, Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) explain is grounded on their understanding of teaching, especially inclusive practice as a complex activity that needs to be studied holistically, if the process of extending everyday effective teaching to meet the needs of children with disabilities is to be understood. The idea of effective teaching also being teaching that is inclusive of all children is a theme that has been reflected already in this section.

Methodologically, Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) used the Framework for Participation⁸ as a tool to guide how they observed and interviewed the teachers that participated in their study. They interpreted their findings on the basis of three main principles that they generated from previous research on inclusive classroom practice. These principles are: inclusive practice is practice that is effective for all children by extending what is normally available in regular classrooms; rejecting deterministic beliefs about fixed ability in how practice is structured; seeing learning difficulties as a professional challenge and an opportunity to work with others.

These three principles are reflected in the various research findings themes in this section. I also discuss them in detail in section 3.4 below. The main theme running through Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) findings is that teachers' inclusive classroom practice (regardless of the teaching strategy being used) is a reflection of the knowledge, attitudes and beliefs that teachers have about learners and learning. These factors influence the way in which teachers respond to learning difficulties experiences by learners in their classrooms. This is similar to the themes that have emerged from the work of Jordan et al. (2010) and Rix et al. (2009).

⁸ I will be discussing the Framework for participation in the next section of this chapter.

This alternative approach taken by the above researchers to studying inclusive practice is based on the fact that they felt that the approaches used in past research no longer reveal anything new in the field and there is a need for a new approach to understanding teachers inclusive classroom practice. They had also been informed by what has been learnt through previous approaches to studying inclusive classroom practice. These inductive approaches, they believe, have provided sufficient evidence, but there is still a need for further developments in the field (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011). Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011), in their study present a more deductive approach through which teachers' inclusive classroom practice can be explored and understood. In this approach, the starting point is what previous research into teachers' classroom practice has indicated as important in the development of classroom practice.

3.3.1 Using an alternative approach in researching inclusive classroom practice

This starting point provides the opportunity for researchers to examine teachers' practice in the light of certain principles or set criteria derived from the literature (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011). I was persuaded by this approach and thus applied a similar approach to my own research context. I believe that having a starting point based on the previous research into teachers' practice provides an opportunity to test new evidence against the existing theories and empirical evidence. Additionally, it allows for a transfer of ideas to see how applicable these are in other contexts of practice beyond those in which the ideas were developed. This type of approach to understanding and examining practice enhances one's ability to understand the evidence that is being newly generated in a particular context, with regard to the experiences of a particular group of people and see how it links to the wider ideas of reality. It also enables a process of exploration in which researchers can examine other aspects of practice that do not necessary align to the pre-existing framework and see what can be added to, extended and improved upon, in the structure of what is already known. It is also a means through which new evidence can enhance a greater understanding of the phenomenon being studied through its application to research in a different context or situation (Esterberg, 2002).

Using a similar approach, Florian and Spratt (2013) studied the practices of trainee teachers in their probationary year of teaching. These trainee teachers had been part of a teacher education programme. Florian and Spratt (2013) developed an inclusive practice framework based on the principles and ideas of inclusive practice presented in the work of Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011). These principles had been developed into courses for a teacher education programme at a UK university where these probationary teachers had been trained (Florian & Spratt, 2013). Florian and Spratt (2013) thus developed an inclusive pedagogical framework within which they drew out elements from previous research work and the teacher education course. After researching their participating trainee teachers' practice, Florian and Spratt (2013) found evidence of inclusive classroom practice in the teachers' practice, which was linked to the theoretical principles of inclusive practice from the framework they had developed. They do however add a caution, as it is difficult to prove whether the practices reflected by the participating teachers were a direct outcome of the teacher education course or a result of the teachers' personal development.

This methodological approach taken by Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) and Spratt and Florian (2013) can be said to have already started to address some of the criticisms and concerns raised by Göransson and Nilholm (2014) in their review of previous research in the field of inclusive education and its practice. Göransson and Nilholm (2014) critiqued most research within the field of inclusive practice as not being specific with regard to the standards or principles that were used to judge or examine the quality of or the nature of practices in schools or classrooms. This call, made by Göransson and Nilholm (2014), on the need for consistency and clarity in identifying how inclusive practice is assessed is necessary. However, there is also need for caution. Caution must be taken because of the need to acknowledge and remain responsive to the research process and the nature of information and data that is being generated (Stake, 2010). This will enable research to focus on the fundamental basis of practice in relation to the ways in which attention is paid to the details of what ideas or principles are informing these practices.

More so, in the use of a deductive approach (where the research commences on the grounds of certain clearly stated ideas), there is a need for a certain degree of flexibility that enables researchers to also account for those perspectives or practices that do not necessarily reflect their predetermined principles and guidelines regarding what practice is (Boyatzis, 1998; Gibbs, 2007; King, 2004). In the examples presented in the research reports that have taken the alternative approach, the researchers only present those bits that are in line with the ideas and principles that they commenced the study with. Although Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) state that some of the teachers' practices did not meet their standard of inclusive practice, they only focus on when the teachers in their study reflected the principles they had set. They did not provide a reflection of whether or how the other aspects of the teachers' practices were useful in enabling them to develop a holistic understanding of the practices implemented.

Notwithstanding the above critique, I have found these studies and the approach to researching inclusive practice taken by this group of researchers useful with regard to the way in which I have come to conceptualize and design my own research work. Florian and Black-Hawkin's (2011) study was particularly relevant in helping me think through how I designed the process through which this research was carried out, while Florian and Spratt's (2013) study was relevant to the later stages of the data analysis and interpretation; I learnt from how they described the process through which they analysed the data generated. It is worth stating that my research extends the knowledge from these research studies, which built on ideas and principles of inclusive practice, because these previous research studies have all been carried out in different contexts to that in which the teachers who participated in my study are located. Both studies were carried out in Scotland, which is a developed context, in contrast to my research context, which is a developing country.

This thesis provides an opportunity to explore these ideas and extends the knowledge by exploring whether the basic ideas on inclusive practice, as obtained in the broader literature, as well in these specific studies, can be developed and implemented effectively across contexts and in varied situations. It is on this note that I will be

discussing the Framework for Participation (Black-Hawkins, 2014), a methodological tool that I used as a theoretical framework in this research, in section 3.5 below. I found the framework for participation particularly useful in the planning, designing, and data generation and in initiating the first two stages of data analysis in this particular research work. I am aware that I could have used the framework for inclusive practice as presented by Florian and Spratt (2013) as a theoretical framework, but at the time of its publication (May 2013), I had already designed the research and the proposal. Regardless, the framework presented by Florian and Spratt (2013) is primarily based on the ideas that have informed this study. I am convinced that by taking this approach I was able to engage with a process of exploring and examining inclusive classroom practice in Nigeria. In this regard, I proceed to discuss the principles of inclusive classroom practice in section 3.4 below.

3.4 Principles of inclusive classroom practice

In discussing what inclusive classroom practice is, I highlighted some of the main principles of inclusive classroom practice. In this section, I discuss these principles and their implications.

3.4.1 Background to principles of inclusive classroom practice

Soon after the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) was declared, studies were conducted with a focus on identifying how inclusive practice was being implemented and how this type of practice could be developed further in schools and classrooms. These studies focused primarily on what factors were necessary for inclusive practice. Just one decade after the Salamanca statement, there was already a vast body of literature on the elements of inclusive practice. A summary of some of the elements of inclusive practice reflected in those early publications is presented in the diagram in Appendix C of this thesis. Notable is Peter's (2003) report, which covers issues around the necessary elements needed both in developed and developing countries to enhance the effective implementation of inclusive practice. These research findings were

published with the purpose of informing and guiding teachers and schools on what they need to do in order to become more inclusive in their practices.

Besides the literature on inclusive practice, at that time there was also another trend in the literature. This literature focused on teachers' attitudes with the purpose of clarifying how teachers' attitudes linked with and influenced the implementation of inclusive practice in schools and classrooms (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). In reviewing some of these studies, Avramidis and Norwich (2002) found that teachers' attitudes alone did not account for their practice. Based on their review, Avramidis and Norwich (2002) pointed out that a combination of other factors influenced what teachers actually did in classrooms. The other factors that they identified were educational environmental issues (such as resource and support availability) and their perceptions of child related issues (such as the child's nature and the severity of their disability). These factors continue to influence debates on inclusive practice (Cigman, 2007a; Low, 2007; Norwich, 2007; Warnock, 2010), teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of inclusive practice (Agbenyega, 2007; de Boer, Pijl, & Minnaert, 2011; Mukhopadhyay, Nenty, & Abosi, 2012) and teachers' implementation of inclusive classroom practice (Jordan et al., 2010; Mukhopadhyay et al., 2012; Savolainen et al., 2012).

Towards the end of the first decade after the Salamanca Statement, the literature on inclusive practice started to identify and reflect the need for more comprehensive research that focused on examining how all of these factors interrelate, influence and determine the development of practice both at the school and classroom levels (Dyson, 1999; Dyson, Howes, & Roberts, 2002). In discussing this need in the development of inclusive practice, Dyson (1999) argued that the varied approaches and trends in research on inclusive practice needed to engage with each other concurrently if the thinking and development of inclusive practice was to become coherent and subsequently develop.

The research that followed these earlier developments did capture this call made by Dyson. Some of this research I have discussed in section 3.3 above. One other research study has contributed to the development of the principles of inclusive classroom practice as presented by Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011). This is the work by Hart, Drummond, and McIntyre (2004). They researched how teachers can develop classroom practices that do not label some students as unable to make progress. In their study, they focused on those processes through which teachers create sufficient and necessary opportunities for all children in their classrooms to learn and make progress. Three main principles of teaching and learning free from ability labelling emerged from the practices of the teachers who participated in the study by Hart et al. (2004).

These principles are: developing a classroom environment in which everybody is accepted as part of the learning process; everybody being trusted; and developing a process in which the adults and children within the classroom are seen as co-agents in all learning endeavours. Through the application of these principles in their classroom practices, the teachers in Hart et al.'s (2004) research were able to develop teaching and learning practices that enabled them to provide learning opportunities for all of the children in their classrooms regardless of an identified learning need. This piece of research is particularly important because it addresses the concern and assumption that the presence of children with an identified learning need will significantly influence the learning progress of all of the other students in the same classroom (Hart, Drummond, & McIntyre, 2007). This assumption is partly based on the premise that some children have fixed abilities and therefore are unable to learn and make progress in schools and classrooms alongside their peers (Hart et al., 2004).

All of the above arguments reflect a combination of ideas regarding the right of all children to be educated as embedded in the policy and ideology of inclusive education (UNESCO, 1994); the rejection of the underpinning belief of an assumed fixed ability of children (especially with regard to children with a disability) (Hart et al., 2007); the understanding that what teachers know, do and believe are interrelated (Rouse, 2007,

2008); the belief that meeting the learning needs of all learners in the classroom, whether or not they have a disability, is the responsibility of the teacher (Jordan et al., 2009).

This above understanding of how inclusive practice is developed relates to and reasserts arguments by Lewis and Norwich (2001, 2005), as well as further arguments by Mitchell (2008), in which they explain that teaching practices apply to all children regardless of whether or not they have a disability. The difference, they add, remains in how these strategies are applied in terms of intensity and focus. These assertions have also been reiterated by recent research such as that by Rix and Sheehy (2014) and Rix, Sheehy, Fletcher-Campbell, Crisp, and Harper (2013). The afore mentioned developments have been pulled together into recent conceptualizations of inclusive classroom practice as reflected in the work of Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011).

3.4.2 Explaining the principles of inclusive classroom practice

Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) identified three broad principles underpinning inclusive classroom practice. These principles are:

1. A shift in focus from some children to all children
2. The rejection of the notion of fixed ability
3. A view of difficulties in learning as a professional challenge for teachers.

A summary of these principles and the different elements that each principle comprises is presented in Table 1 below. Table 1 is a table adopted from Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011).

Table 1: Principles of inclusive classroom practice

<i>Elements of inclusive practice as presented by (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011; p818 – 819)</i>	
<p>1. Shifting the focus from one that is concerned with only those individuals who have been identified as having ‘additional needs’ (can also be referred to as disability in some contexts) to the learning of all children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Creating learning opportunities that are made sufficiently available for everyone so that all learners are able to participate in classroom life</i> b. <i>Extending what is ordinarily available for all learners (creating a rich learning community) rather than using teaching and learning strategies that are suitable for most alongside something ‘additional’ or ‘different’ for some who experience difficulties</i> c. <i>Focusing on what is to be taught (and how) rather than who is to learn it.</i> 	
<p>2. Rejecting deterministic beliefs about ability as being fixed and the associated idea that the presence of some will hold back the progress of others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Believing that all children will make progress, learn and achieve</i> b. <i>Focusing teaching and learning on what children can do rather than on what they cannot do</i> c. <i>Using a variety of grouping strategies to support everyone’s learning rather than relying on ability grouping to separate ‘able’ from ‘less able’ students</i> d. <i>Using formative assessment to support learning</i> 	
<p>3. Seeing difficulties in learning as professional challenges for teachers, rather than deficits in learners, which encourages the development of new ways of working</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Seeking and trying out new ways of working to support the learning of all children</i> b. <i>Working with and through other adults that respect the dignity of learners as full members of the community of the classroom</i> c. <i>Being committed to continuing professional development as a way of developing more inclusive practices</i> 	

*3.4.2.1 Shift in focus from **some** children to **all** children:*

This principle, Florian (2010) argues, is not an a call to return to the idea of whole class teaching. In a whole class system of teaching, the adult (i.e. the teacher) remains the centre of the learning experience and has the responsibility for transmitting knowledge to students (Freire, 2000; Rogoff, 1994). Instead, this approach provides opportunities

and a range of options that are available to everybody in the class rather than a set of options that are differentiated for some (Florian & Spratt, 2013). This underpinning idea of inclusive classroom practice draws from a socio-cultural understanding of learning, rooted in the work of Lave (1996) Lave and Wenger (1991) (Leach & Moon, 2008); Rogoff (1994) (Black-Hawkins, 2014) and Vygostky (de Valenzuela, 2007; De Valenzuela, 2013; Kershner, 2009). I have already explained this understanding in sub-section 3.2.1 above.

Drawing on this understanding of the process of learning, inclusive practice becomes a dynamic, rich and complex process that involves all children in the life and learning of schools and classrooms (Black-Hawkins & Florian, 2012; Florian & Spratt, 2013). This process, Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) add, involves a more explicit focus on what it is that is to be learnt and how it can be learnt and does not differentiate on the basis of who can learn what and who cannot. This in turn will lead to innovative and creative ways of opening up opportunities for all to become meaningfully engaged with learning endeavours. The emphasis within this principle is also a shift from the idea that learning endeavours are differentiated for children on the basis of labels and categories that are based on specific learning needs. This marks and distinctively identifies children with disabilities as different from their peers and thus the associated stigma of being different is inculcated into the educational experiences of those with a learning need.

Within this principle, whatever is appropriate for each student and at whatever level that is made available to them can be part of the wider range of options in the classroom. Learners can then be enabled to be part of the process of deciding what they want to do and what they think might enable them to achieve the aim of the learning activity (Black-Hawkins & Florian, 2012; Hart, 2000; Hart et al., 2004).

One of the main strengths of the social-cultural perspective to learning, as already stated, is the active role assumed by all members of the classroom community. It is on the basis of trust that everybody is involved and is a partner in the learning process. Decisions made in the process are based on the combined decisions of both the teacher who is

planning the learning experiences and the students who are to decide on what experience (i.e. nature) or task they want to be engaged in choosing from of a variety of tasks available (Hart et al., 2004; Rogoff, 1994). In inclusive classrooms, part of the process of learning involves trusting that children are able to contribute to decisions on what, when and how and that these decisions can be facilitated or guided by the teacher (Hart, 2000; Hart et al., 2004). The place of the teacher as the more experienced adult that facilitates the process still remains prominent (Daniels, 2009). They can use their experience to provide options and a variety of learning aids in the classroom in such a way that they trust and support all children to make the right decision with regard to which of the options can enhance their own learning and enable them to still be part of the classroom community sharing in the community's experiences (Black-Hawkins & Florian, 2012; Florian, 2010).

The emphasis here is on the fact that the students are allowed to be part of the decision making process that supports their learning, and there is an emphasis and a focus on how the adaptation or intensification is provided so that a particular child is not marked out as different from the others in the process, as reflected in the example provided by Florian (2010). Extending what is normally available involves inculcating the response into the activities and teaching in a way that reflects and enriches the learning community so that no one is particularly marked out or treated differently (Florian, 2010, 2014a).

3.4.2.2 Rejecting the notion of fixed ability

The second underpinning principle of inclusive practice is the rejection of the notion that children are born with a certain level of ability such that their current attainment can be used to determine their future abilities, potentials and possible achievements (Hart et al., 2004). The notion of fixed abilities is based on the long-standing and continuous argument on the use of abilities as criteria in grouping and categorizing children in learning activities. The use of ability labels as a criteria in determining learning experiences has been found to have detrimental effects on the teachers and the pupils involved (those labelled and categorized as having a fixed ability and being unable to

progress) and on the nature of the teaching and learning processes and/or experiences in which both parties become engaged (Dweck, 2000; Gillard, 2008; Hart et al., 2007).

These detrimental effects arise especially when decisions are made and actions are taken on the basis that some children belong to either of the extreme ends of the ability curve and will remain there throughout their learning experiences and endeavours. This nature of thinking and sorting children out on the basis of perceived abilities has persisted in the development and processes of educational endeavours over the decades (Fendler & Muzaffar, 2008). In inclusive classrooms, teachers are aware of and have the understanding that their actions and the choices they make regarding how they organize and carry out their lessons send a message to all those involved in the classroom context (with regard to who can and who cannot learn) (Hart et al., 2007). More importantly, these decisions and actions in classrooms influence other actions and decisions made well beyond the classroom context (Alexander, 2001; Hart et al., 2004). Teachers who implement inclusive classroom practice work towards creating an understanding amongst the members of the class community that differences are an inevitable part of everyday classroom life (Hart et al., 2007).

For those students who are labelled as having a fixed ability and being unable to progress, barriers and possible limits to their learning potentials are imposed. This can often become a source of disadvantage not only with regard to their ability to make progress, but also in relation to them making the effort to progress and be successful in their learning endeavours (Dweck, 2000; Gillborn & Mirza, 2000; Gillborn & Youdell, 2000). This, Dweck (2000), Pearl (1997) and Valencia (1997) explain, can undermine to a significant extent, the student's sense of dignity, self-belief, hope and expectation with regard to their own learning. Students' ability to perceive themselves as creative and competent human beings is thus tempered with and in some instances completely marred. In the long run, the student(s) labelled as having fixed abilities can become accustomed to responding in such a way that they either live up to or within what they

perceive as the teachers' expectations of what they can learn and how they can progress (Dweck, 2000; Hart et al., 2004).

For teachers, holding the notion that students have a fixed ability, and have no potential to make progress reduces their power, the agency or control they feel that they have and their tendency to promote learning and development for all of the children in their classroom (Hart, 1996, 2000; Marshall & Drummond, 2006). This has implications for the nature of the attitudes that teachers hold towards their students. It also influences the kind of behaviours and ways in which they respond to their students' learning needs or how they progress. More often, the presence of children who have been labelled is often perceived as also holding back the learning progress of others in the classroom (Drummond, 2011; Hart et al., 2004; Sukhnandan & Lee, 1998).

Furthermore, the continuing effect of the belief in fixed ability for some children has also been found to have led to curriculum polarization for students in the same classroom context (Boaler, Wiliam, & Brown, 2000). Curriculum polarization is a form of division in which students perceived as being unable to progress and learn are provided with limited and restricted opportunities to learn while for those perceived as progressing, they are required to learn at a level that prioritizes the acquisition of knowledge over developing an understanding of the possible application of what is being learnt beyond the classroom situation (Boaler et al., 2000). Moreover, teachers have continued to express their reluctance to allow children with disabilities or difficulties to learn in their classrooms because of the concern that the learning of others will be slowed down due to of the difficulties experienced by some (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; de Boer et al., 2011).

Within inclusive classroom practices diversity is acknowledged as part of the classroom nature and the notion of fixed ability is rejected. Teachers are able to create a space that enables them to adapt and use a range of teaching strategies and approaches to meet the learning needs of all students. This opens up the possibility for reflection and for addressing instances where there is a learning difficulty. A learning need is then viewed

as a professional challenge and an opportunity to develop new ways of working (Black-Hawkins & Florian, 2012; Boaler et al., 2000; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Hart, 2000; Hart et al., 2004). I will be discussing details of how this can be enacted in practice when I discuss the third principle of inclusive classroom practice below. Mainly, the focus in inclusive practice is on what can be developed (Claxton, 2009) and the use of information gained through assessment as information that can guide future teaching and learning (Hart, 2000).

Commenting on the notion of rejecting fixed abilities in children, especially if the child has a learning need because of a disability, Norwich (2013) acknowledges the fact that in practice the term ‘ability’ is often used as a shorthand for intellectual abilities or intelligence. He also points to the fact that ability is often used as a major general factor to determine learning experiences in schools and classrooms. He adds that this is an outcome of the assumptions that low intellectual abilities are represented as fixed and within the child and that can be damning or become a source of stigmatization against the child who has been labelled as such. These are reasons why inclusive practice rejects the notion that some children have fixed abilities.

The above paragraph also addresses concerns raised by Mock and Kauffman (2002), who discount the notion of rejecting ability labelling because they argue that this implies removing the differences in abilities between children. Rejecting the notion of children having fixed abilities does not imply that differences between people (or students) can be removed. It means that differences are accepted as part of an everyday normal classroom environment and that such differences are used in such a manner that an enriching learning experience is provided for all (Black-Hawkins & Florian, 2012; Florian, 2010). Inclusive classroom practice does not deny differences but accepts them and sees them as a strength that enriches the classroom community (Florian, 2007; Miles & Ainscow, 2010), as students work together, share ideas and learn from interacting with each other (Florian & Spratt, 2013; Kershner, 2009). It also means that current attainment or captured ability is not used as a complete predictor of what is possible and

future possibilities but as a source of information that can be used to support further learning endeavours (Claxton, 2009; Hart et al., 2004; Hayward, 2014).

The teacher's responsibility is to tailor their actions towards supporting the development of students' abilities as these abilities are being transformed and changed at various stages and towards future learning in classrooms (Vygotsky, 1978). Teachers' actions in inclusive classrooms are interpreted and understood on the basis of what meaning such actions hold in relation to the learning and development of the children they teach (Chaiklin, 2003). Teachers utilize the information available to them to facilitate the learning process such that they are able to enhance, and lead the development and utilization of these varied abilities (Daniels, 2005; Daniels, 2009; Rogoff, 1999). This argument leads to the third principle of inclusive classroom practice.

3.4.2.3 Difficulties in learning as a professional challenge

Following the understanding that teachers are to interpret their actions in relation to what that means for the learning and development of the children in their classrooms (Chaiklin, 2003), teachers in inclusive classrooms in which there are diverse learning needs utilize information generated through classroom activities to inform their actions and not as an end point to their actions. Also significant to this principle is how teachers respond to the information or feedback they have with regard to current progress and attainment in learning activities. The interpretation of such information is what makes the difference in the response provided (Marshall & Drummond, 2006). When teachers are able to interpret a difficulty in learning as a professional challenge and seek new ways of working, then they have embedded this third principle of inclusive classroom practice into their thinking and actions (Black-Hawkins & Florian, 2012; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2010). This requires that class teachers take responsibility for all learners, including those who are experiencing difficulties in learning. Such difficulties are perceived as a challenge to be addressed and not as a deficit located in the learner. Within this principle, new approaches and ways to support the learning of all children in the classroom are continuously being sought (Florian & Spratt, 2013).

The use of information to inform learning requires teachers to reflect and revisit classroom experiences in order to explore what circumstances led to or contributed to the experiences that all of the children in their classrooms are having in the process of teaching and learning (Hart, 2000; Hart, 2012). This reflection is important in how teachers are able to draw from their skills, knowledge and experience to make a difference to the learning experiences of their students (Hart, 2012). In such an approach, evidence of students' achievements and progress is elicited, interpreted and used to make decisions about the next steps for instruction. These decisions are therefore better or better founded than decisions made without any information or feedback. Mainly, information from assessment is used to guide the teaching and learning processes (Black & Wiliam, 2009).

Pivotal to this understating is how assessment is seen as part of, and is integrated into the teaching and learning process (Hayward, 2014; Swaffield, 2003). Teachers' understanding of learning difficulties as a professional challenge implies an avoidance of quick and uninformed judgments regarding children's learning, especially if the child has a learning difficulty because of a disability. In making any decision, there is a place to draw on all of the information about the child and his/her learning; on their skills as teachers; on the knowledge they have, and retrospectively on the learning encounter in order to revise, refine and readjust their responses in teaching and learning in ways that will enhance the participation and learning of the child concerned (Hart, 2012).

In discussing how teachers can address difficulties in learning for their students, especially when the child has a specific learning need, Hart (2000; 2012) for example, presented five moves that teachers can take in order to achieve this process. Firstly, teachers can explore how the specific characteristics of the child's environment could be connected to the child's immediate and possible wider learning environments. If any connections are made these can be addressed. If none is made, then the teacher can continue exploring using the second move. The second move involves trying to explore

alternative interpretations that can give meaning to specific difficulties and situations. Exploring such alternative interpretations enables a process of re-examining the situation. The third move Hart (2000; 2012) adds, involves engaging with the child's view of the situation or difficulty.

Children's contributions to teaching and learning experiences, Alexander (2014) argues are effective in practice when they are taken to be part of the teaching process and not separated from the process of learning. In this move, taking the child's view involves trying to understand the child's response from the child's perspective (Hart, 2012). Taking account of one's own feelings as the teacher is the fourth move proposed by Hart (2000). Teaching, Davis and Sumara (1999) and Rix and Sheehy (2014) argue, is a complex activity that cannot be separated from the whole experience of a teacher as an individual.

The implication of this is that teachers need to reflect on how their professional and personal circumstances can influence the type of decisions they make with regard to the learning of their students. This realization that teaching in classrooms can be complexly related to teachers' individual circumstances leads to the final move, which requires teachers to postpone judgments bearing in mind that they might not have all of the necessary information and competence to completely trust their judgment (Hart, 2012). This can simply mean taking a step further towards generating more information that can support decision making (Hart, 2012), or adding to their knowledge in ways that support and develop their practices (Norwich & Lewis, 2007; Rix & Sheehy, 2014).

Commenting on this principle, where teachers see learning difficulties as a professional challenge, Mock and Kauffman (2002), in a much earlier work, discount the idea that teachers in regular classrooms can take on the role and responsibility of managing the learning experiences of all of the children in their classroom. Their position is based on the premise that teachers cannot be adequately and completely prepared for this task. While it is indeed difficult to effectively prepare teachers for this task, teachers in

inclusive classrooms, as argued earlier, also see themselves as learners who are learning through the process of doing the job (Kershner, 2009; Rogoff, 1994). Teachers' learning in practice is also continuously being revised and redeveloped (Hart, 2000; Hart, 2012), just as the process of developing inclusive practices is a continuous and never-ending process (Booth et al., 2002; UNESCO, 2000). Part of this process of development also involves having to work with the necessary support in the school and classroom or beyond this when the need arises (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Peters, 2003).

Teachers taking responsibility for the learning of all of the children in their classroom, Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) state, does not imply the rejection of support from support staff but is a process that involves finding ways to draw from and employ the skills and expertise of the support staff (or resource person depending on the context of practice) in ways that do not undermine the dignity of the learner experiencing the difficulty in learning as a rightful member of the classroom community. Inclusive classroom practice involves creating an environment for teachers to work with specialist (s) and/or other staff towards finding ways of providing meaningful learning experiences for all children within the classroom community (Florian & Spratt, 2013). Learning from each other is a basic principle that adults and children in an inclusive setting are expected to inculcate into their daily routines and interactions. No-one has an absolute monopoly over knowledge or expertise and the boundaries between who is perceived as more superior is minimized (Kershner, 2009; Rogoff, 1994).

In discussing this aspect of inclusive classroom practice, Norwich (2013) noted that difficulties in learning might not necessarily be attributed only to the learner but to situations and opportunities, whilst at other times, learning difficulties might indeed be attributed to the child. His argument is that these factors interrelate and are not two separate things. The argument that sometimes learning difficulties are a result of the interaction between the child, his/her characteristics and the situations or opportunities available, applies in contexts such as Nigeria and/or other developing contexts where resources are even scarcer compared to developed contexts.

Moreover, other factors such as: knowledge of basic teaching skills and learning processes that can be explored; more time constraints as a result of class sizes that place more demands on teachers' time and energy; and teachers' attendance at work all influence the nature of teachers' work in classrooms. These can account for teachers' practice and children's learning in significant ways, and can influence the learning of children with disabilities as well (Barrett, 2007; Miles & Ahuja, 2007; Peters, 2007b; Singal & Muthukrishna, 2014; UNESCO, 2014).

3.5 Framework for participation

Black-Hawkins (2014) offers the framework for participation as a useful theoretical framework that researchers can use both as a research tool, and a methodological lens that allows them to approach the processes of data generation and data analysis, as well as presentation of evidence on classroom inclusive practices flexibly. The framework provides a structure that creates ways in which such evidence can inform future actions and decisions, which are all useful in improving and supporting developments in teachers' classroom practice. The above purpose and objective of the framework for participation is the first reason why I found it useful and adopted it as a theoretical framework to guide this research. I have explained that my aim and intention in carrying out this research was to understand how teachers with experience of inclusive education are developing practice in Nigerian classrooms. The framework provided a guide and premise within which I was able to understand what teachers do; how they do it; and why they do what they do.

In justifying the use of the term 'participation' within the framework, Black-Hawkins (2014) explains that the term as used in educational research, embeds within it four main principles that are relevant and seemingly connect to the ideas of inclusive classroom practice. These principles or ideas are: firstly, participation is about decision making and having choices; secondly, participation is often used with regard to research on those who have been marginalized and vulnerable; thirdly, research draws on the concept of participation as a way of examining the collective and social aspects of teaching and

learning in classrooms, which often includes existing and developing relationships; and fourthly, inclusive education is only said to be taking place if opportunities are provided for a child or group of children to learn and make progress (i.e. that are able to learn and achieve).

All of these are directly related to the concept of inclusive practice, which was discussed in sections 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 above. More so, this research focuses on inclusive practice for children with disabilities. I have explained how children with disabilities have been marginalized within the system of education over the years. The preceding statement is the second justification and the basis on which I found the framework for participation a useful tool to use as a theoretical framework in guiding this particular research. With regard to decision making and having choices, I have explained my understanding of inclusive practice as that which involves learners being able to make decisions by contributing as well as engaging with learning in classroom communities (Hart et al., 2004). I have also discussed, in section 3.2, how my conceptualization of inclusive practice aligns with those ideas that draw heavily from the social cultural theories of learning.

3.5.1 Development of the framework for participation

Discussing how the framework for participation has evolved over the years Black-Hawkins (2010) locates its development within the context of previous research that focused on understanding the relationship between inclusion and achievement⁹. Thus the framework is premised on the key principles of inclusive education and takes account of the experiences of all members and aspects of a school (in its initial form) (Black-Hawkins, 2010). More recently, after some revision, the framework for participation has taken account of the experiences as well as all of the aspects of classroom life. Primarily, the framework is aimed at supporting research processes that examine practice as they aim to identify those aspects of practice that are in need of improvement. Reflective

⁹ Black-Hawkins (2010) also acknowledges that the ideas for this initial version of the framework for participation can be traced to her initial research, Black-Hawkins (2002), which focused on understanding school culture.

questions regarding the what, why and how embedded into the framework are aimed at facilitating the necessary and required rigorous systematic and theoretical reflections (Black-Hawkins, 2014).

The framework was first used by Black-Hawkins and her colleagues, Florian and Rouse in a study that focused on examining the relationship between inclusion and achievement (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007). The initial framework was further used in a later study on classroom practice by Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011). It was this particular research that led to the last revision of the framework for participation (Black-Hawkins, 2014) used in this research. The initial framework comprised three sections that focused on participation and access, participation and collaboration, and participation and diversity (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007). However, the current framework has added to these with a section on participation and achievement (Black-Hawkins, 2014). It is this sections that I now turn to below.

3.5.2 Elements of the framework for participation

The four sections of the framework for participation represent the various aspects of inclusive practice and the features of participation. Black-Hawkins (2014) explicates that these sections, although they interrelate and overlap in many ways, are not hierarchical in how they have been arranged. Their overlapping nature is a reflection of the processes that are involved in the everyday experiences of adults and children in classrooms. Black-Hawkins (2014) argues that the overlapping nature of the various sections is a strength for the research process because it allows the framework to build with careful consideration of the complex nature of classrooms by focusing on how the values and beliefs are revealed through the practices and activities in which the children and adults in a classroom are engaged. It also reveals the various interactions and relationships taking place between all those in the classroom. The sections of the framework for participation are:

- a. participation and access: being there;
- b. participation and collaboration: learning together;

- c. participation and achievement: supporting everyone's learning; and
- d. participation and diversity: recognition and acceptance.

The entire framework for participation with all of its sections and all of their components is presented on Table 2 on the next page.

Table 2: Framework for participation

(Table from Black-Hawkins (2014; p. 393)

1. Participation and access: Being there

- Joining the class
- Staying in class
- Accessing spaces and places in the class
- Accessing the curriculum
 - ✓ Who is given access and who is denied access? And by whom?
 - ✓ What classroom practices promote access? What classroom practices reinforce barriers to access?
 - ✓ Why within the values and beliefs of the classroom community is greater access afforded to some individuals/groups? And, why is access withheld from some?

2. Participation and collaboration: Learning and working together

- Children learning together in the class
- Members of staff learning together in the class
- Members of staff learning with others from beyond the class
 - ✓ Who learns together and who does not learn together?
 - ✓ What classroom practices promote collaboration? What classroom practices reinforce barriers to collaboration?
 - ✓ Why within the values and beliefs of the classroom community do some individuals/groups learn together? And, why are there barriers to some learning together?

3. Participation and achievement: supporting everyone's learning

- Regarding progress in learning as an everyday expression
- Valuing and rewarding a range of achievements
- Focusing on what learners can do rather than what they cannot do
- Using formative assessment to support learning
 - ✓ Who achieves? Who does not achieve?
 - ✓ What classroom practices promote achievement for all? What classroom practices reinforce barriers to achievement?
 - ✓ Why within the values and beliefs of the classroom community do some individuals/groups achieve? And, why are there barriers to achievement for some?

4. Participation and diversity: recognizing and accepting differences

- Recognizing and accepting children, by staff
- Recognizing and accepting staff, by staff
- Recognizing and accepting children, by children
 - ✓ Who is recognized and accepted as a person and by whom? Who is not recognized and accepted as a person and by whom?
 - ✓ What practices promote recognition and acceptance? What practices form barriers to recognition and acceptance?
 - ✓ Why within the values and beliefs of the classroom community are some individuals and groups accepted? And, why are there barriers to recognition and acceptance for some?

Black-Hawkins (2014) explains that each of these sections is accompanied by the who, what and why questions that carefully interrogate the provision of access and the process of collaboration, focus on the progress of all, and more importantly focus on how members of the class community are recognized and accepted. All of these ideas Black-Hawkins (2014) bases on Booth's (2003) conceptualization of participation.

In defining the idea of participation in an inclusive school and classroom, Booth (2003) explains that '*participation in education involves going beyond access(p.2)*' –identifying that it first starts with the provision of access with the child or children being there, which is the first section of the framework for participation- . '*It implies learning alongside others and collaborating with them in shared lessons. It involves active engagement with what is learnt and taught, and having a say in how education is experienced* ' (p.2)– these are the second and third sections of the framework, which focus on how members of the classroom community work together and learn together through their interactions and classroom activities. It also highlights how experiences are determined through an active engagement with all to ascertain that everyone is supported in ways in which they make progress through the experience-. '*But participation also involves being recognized for oneself and being accepted for oneself. I participate with you, when you recognize me as a person like yourself and accept me for who I am (p.2)*' This represents and connects to the last section of the framework for

participation which is participation and diversity. The participation and diversity section reflects on and explores the relationships of how differences and why differences are recognized or not recognized in classrooms interactions.

With regard to the fourth section, participation and diversity, Black-Hawkins adds that this aspect relates to all aspects of classroom practices with regard to access, collaboration and achievement, but still remains the most difficult to address in discerning the process of participation and barriers to participation. This difficulty arises from the fact that the values and beliefs that shape the relationships between and actions towards members of the classroom are most often hidden and remain unquestioned by both adults and children alike. However, Black-Hawkins (2014) argues that it is this aspect of diversity that focuses on the why question, which remains pertinent to understanding practice because it leads to a process that unveils the “who does what?”, and “what is being done?” questions of the framework for participation. Essentially, the framework and its various sections are underpinned and explored through a reflexive process that continuously focuses and interrogates the information being generated in classrooms by researchers through three main questions. These questions are:

1. **WHO** does and does not participate? And, who decides?
 2. **WHAT** are the classroom practices that promote participation? What are the classroom practices that reinforce barriers to participation?
 3. **WHY** do these practices that promote participation take place (values and beliefs in the classroom community)? Why do these practices that are barriers to participation take place (values and beliefs in the classroom community)?
- Black-Hawkins (2014; p391)

It was these reflective questions from the framework for participation that I used to enhance my reflection throughout the period of data collection and data analysis as I sought to address the main research question raised in this research.

3.6 Research aim and question

In reviewing the literature on inclusive practice in Nigeria, I identified a gap in the literature that was yet to be fully explored. This gap is that there is an absence of an understanding of or knowledge on how children with disabilities who have been allowed access into regular classrooms are being educated. Moreover, I have highlighted how an interaction between different elements of inclusive classroom practice needs to be taken into account when developing an understanding of the practice that is being developed. It is within this context that I raised the question; *how are teachers with the experience of inclusive education developing their practice in Nigerian classrooms?* to guide this research project. In raising the above research question, I aimed to develop an understanding of teachers' practice and how they are developing this practice in Nigerian classrooms. My aim was to develop an understanding of how children with disabilities who have been allowed access into classrooms are being educated and the learning experiences with which they are engaging with by focusing on teachers' decisions and actions in the context within which they find themselves (Kelchtermans, 2013).

Ainscow (1999) argues that the decisions and ideas that inform teachers' actions in classrooms are often left unexplored. In some instances, some of these decisions are based on teachers' professional backgrounds and/or personal interests, especially when they respond to issues while teaching and learning is ongoing (Dyson & Millward, 2000). Whichever way teachers decide to anchor their decisions and actions, these decisions are made and actions are taken with the aim of achieving certain values that are situated in teachers' perception of what education is, the quality of education required for the children that they teach, and how education might be attained for all children (Alexander, 2001; Claxton, 2007). Thus, exploring these issues is enabled through a process that examines what is happening and why it is happening (Black-Hawkins, 2014).

In order to fully explore what is happening and why it was happening, I also raised two other sub research questions. These sub-questions are:

1. *What type of practice are these teachers engaging with?*
2. *In what ways are the elements 'believing, knowing and doing' interacting in these teachers classroom practices?*

I had highlighted earlier how there are still debates on how exactly the implementation of inclusive education should look in practice. The nature of inclusive practice that is to be implemented in classrooms and schools is still a contested area in the field of inclusive education (Slee, 2006). Despite this lack of agreement on what exactly inclusive practice is, there appears to be a kind of consensus in the literature that inclusive practice is *a process of change* (Dyson, 1999; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Slee, 2006). In the context of the definition of inclusive education that I have adopted in this research, this process means a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing their participation in learning, cultures and communities, with the aim of reducing exclusion within school and classroom learning activities (Booth et al., 2002; UNESCO, 2005). Regardless of the above understanding of what inclusive practice is, the recent literature has pointed to the fact that not a lot is known about the details of the process through which this is done at the classroom level of practice (Artiles et al., 2007; Black-Hawkins, 2014; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011).

In explaining how educational change takes place, Fullan (2007) states that educational change in practice largely depends on the extent to which the meaning of the intended change is shared among those involved in the change process. Therefore, there is a need to agree upon what exactly needs to be change and how the process of changed can be carried out. Regardless, this change cannot begin until there is a deliberate effort to understand the process in which each individual is engaged with the view of discerning the similarities or differences between what teachers do in classrooms (Fullan, 2007). Teachers and school administrators are at the centre of negotiating practice. In-depth clarity or an insight into how they implement and make decisions remains relevant in

developing an understanding of exactly what they do and how they go about doing what they do (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007; Dyson et al., 2004; Dyson & Millward, 2000; Lipsky, 2010).

This exploration, Florian (2014b) argues, needs to be explored through the lens of what is already available and known from previous research evidence. Taking this approach can enhance the process through which the intentions as stated in philosophical or policy declarations can be matched alongside actual practice in ways that the gap between expected developments and actual developments could be merged. This gap, which has persisted over the years, has been attributed to the scarcity of research that has engaged with particular principles of developing practice in ways that are systematic (Artiles et al., 2007; Dyson et al., 2002; Rose et al., 2010). The scarcity of such detailed research has contributed to the absence of text from which teachers can learn from because the complexity of classroom life is often ignored. There are a lot more text that present quick fix ideas which makes it difficult for teachers to learn from, as well as use such information to sustain their classroom practices (Black-Hawkins, 2012).

In this regard, Black-Hawkins (2014) points out that more research that looks into practices in such a way that teachers are able to account for the daily task that they have to carry out in classrooms and do it in such a manner that they do not stigmatize any child because of an identified learning need is required. Therefore, understanding the processes with which teachers are engaging is essential in order to support and address issues that relate to the different sorts of interpretations upon which practitioners' practice is based. The actions reflected need to be understood in terms of those personal ideas and conceptions regarding what is supposed to be or what should be prioritized in teaching and learning (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007; Dyson & Millward, 2000; Fulcher, 1989). In the light of the above research aim and question, I now move on to the next chapter in which I elaborate on the methodological understanding and process that underpinned this research.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

Social inquiries, such as the one being reported upon here, engage with domains of methodological issues and assumptions that include: epistemological assumptions and ontological stances, the design of the inquiry and the process through which the inquiry is carried out (Greene, 2006). Even though these domains appear to be separate entities as I present them in different sections of this chapter, they were approached as domains that interact, interconnect and inform each other in the decisions that I made at each level and stage, and in every aspect of this research process (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995). It is along this line of argument that I present the ontological, epistemological and methodological (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) decisions that I made in designing and carrying out this research.

In the light of the above, this chapter is divided into 7 sections. Section 4.2 begins with a discussion of the research paradigm within which I have situated this research. In discussing this paradigm, I will explain the stance that I took and why I took such a stance in this particular research. This discussion is succeeded by section 4.3, in which I explain how I approached and designed this piece of research. Afterwards, section 4.4 discusses the process through which I sampled the teachers that participated in this research. In section 4.5, I explain the methods that I used and how I used them for the purpose of generating the data used in this study. Immediately after discussing the methods used, in section 4.6 I provide an overview of how the ethical issues were addressed when I designed, carried out and reported on this research work. This chapter ends in section 4.7 where I highlight, reflect on and discuss the measures that were embedded into the research process in order to enhance the quality of the research.

4.2 Research paradigm (ontology and epistemology)

Guba (1990) defines a research paradigm as a basic set of beliefs that guide actions. These actions can be everyday actions or actions taken in connection with a discipline or an inquiry. Guba (1990) adds that the implication of a research paradigm is that such a set of beliefs is a response to these three questions. Firstly, what is “knowable”? Or what is the nature of reality (*i.e. ontology*)? Secondly, what is the nature of the relationship between the knower (the researcher) and the known (the knowable)? (*i.e. the epistemological stance*) and thirdly, how should the inquirer go about finding out knowledge? (*i.e. the methodology*). In this section, I make explicit the research paradigm within which I have situated this research work.

In the previous chapters, where I have introduced this research and its context (both in terms of the location and in the literature), I explained my understanding of issues within the field of inclusive practice. I have also positioned myself within the debates on inclusive practice with regard to both the literature from Nigeria and the broader literature on inclusive practice. These understandings in turn informed the nature of the research questions raised, an indication that this research sits within the social constructivist research paradigm.

Within the social constructivist research paradigm, reality for an individual is an outcome of a process through which that individual makes sense of the social and physical world around them. It is through the process of interacting with the social and physical world that an individual constructs what reality is for them on the basis of how they make sense of it. These constructions subsequently become the perceptions that individuals develop and these perceptions are reinforced through their interactions with others. Reality is therefore based on an individual’s experience and understanding of the world, which in turn has implications for the life of that individual making the construction and for others with whom s/he interacts (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Searle, 2006).

In locating my overall research paradigm within the social constructivist paradigm, I am acknowledging that individuals have a construction of what reality is for them and that this reality is dependent on their location and standpoint, their past experiences, who they are and what their interactions with others mean to them. This reality is known through an identification of the patterns in the nature of reality espoused by the individual concerned and the reality as espoused by the others with whom they interact in their immediate, or in some instances in a much wider context (Searle, 1996).

In the context of this research, I am taking the stance that each of the participating teachers has their own construction of what reality is for them with regard to how they negotiate practice in their respective classrooms. Thus, while planning and carrying out the research, I was not in any way aiming to discover a single reality with all of the research participants. I was interested in seeing whether there were identifiable patterns that could emerge from the realities of participating teachers, and if these realities were comparable to the realities of other teachers whose practice has been studied over the years (Charmaz, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Guba, 1990).

4.3 Research approach and design

Following the above named research paradigm, I was more predisposed towards approaching the study qualitatively because developing an understanding of teachers' experiences and practices of inclusive practice is a complex phenomenon that cannot be measured in terms of numbers or fixed categories (Bryman, 2012). In approaching the study qualitatively, I was able to give priority to gaining an understanding of the complexities, varied perspectives and experiences of the research participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Approaching a research study qualitatively primarily implies that the research is aimed at understanding the meaning of human actions through the use of non-numeric data in the form of words. To achieve the above objective, the researcher studies things in their natural settings, attempts to make sense of, or interpret the phenomena being studied in terms of the meaning that people associate to that phenomena (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Schwandt, 2001). Accordingly, this study was

approached qualitatively because of its aim to generate direct interpretations of how the research participants made sense of their own reality (Bryman, 2012; Denscombe, 2010).

Moreover, in approaching this research qualitatively, I was able to allow the necessary interactions required within a social constructivist research paradigm. These interactions were aimed at generating data (Esterberg, 2002; Geertz, 1973). I was able to use two different methods of data generation in a manner that enhanced my ability to understand the data that was being generated, in ways that allowed a reflection of the complexity and uncertainty embedded in teachers' work (Crotty, 1998; Eraut, 2007; Helsing, 2007). In addition, I was able to take account of the classroom context within which the participating teachers are situated (Mason, 2002; Seale, 1999a).

4.3.1 An instrumental - collective case study

I designed this study as an instrumental - collective case study (Stake, 1995, 2005) aimed at understanding how teachers with the experience of inclusive education are negotiating and developing their practice in Nigerian classrooms. My decision was based on my understanding of cases following the definitions provided by Stake (1995, 2005) and Vaughan (1992). They defined cases as bounded systems that are specific and complex and have the ability to function. Case studies, they add, provide the opportunity to explore generic processes (inclusive practice for example) across individual units (such as teachers). Twelve teachers participated in this research and each of them was regarded as a case. With each of these cases, I focused on how they were negotiating their practice in a classroom in which children with disabilities are included alongside their peers who have no identified disabilities.

In this regard, I aligned my intention to use a case study research design along the lines of Thomas's (2011) assertion that case studies are relevant research designs that create the opportunity for a researcher to provide a rich picture, as well as gain an analytic insight into the issue being studied. Thomas (2011) justifies this position by explaining that a case study comprises a subject of interest (which can be a person, a place, an event

or a phenomenon) and an analytic frame within which it is studied. He thus defines a case study as being an “*analysis of persons, events, decisions, periods, projects, policies, institutions or other systems which are studied holistically by one or more methods. The case that is the subject of the inquiry will be an instance of a class of phenomena that provides an analytical frame ...within which the study is conducted and which the case illuminates and explicates*” (Thomas, 2011, p. 23). In the context of this particular research, the cases are the teachers and the phenomenon that they represent and that is being studied is their inclusive classroom practice.

I describe my approach to the case study as instrumental because each participant is a case that was examined to provide an insight into experiences of inclusive practice in Nigerian classrooms. Stake (2005) defines instrumental case studies as case studies that are examined mainly for the purpose of providing an insight into an issue or to redraw generalizations. He further explains that in such a case study, a case (i.e. the object/unit of attention) is of secondary interest in the research process as the case only plays a supportive role in enhancing the understanding of something else (i.e. the phenomenon of interest). The case teachers in this research were seen as important but secondary because my focus on them was for the purpose of enhancing my understanding of the nature of inclusive practice that they were implementing and developing in their classrooms. The practice of each participating teacher was studied in depth and the context within which they practice was explored, they were selected because they were helpful in developing an understanding of the experience of teaching in inclusive classrooms in Nigeria. In this light, this case study is an instrumental - collective case study.

4.3.2 Generalizability of case studies

The generalizability of conclusions drawn from research designed as case studies is one of the major debates surrounding case study research design (Bassey, 1999; Flyvbjerg, 2004; Harmmersley, Gomm, & Peter, 2000; Stake, 1995, 2005; Thomas, 2011). Some of these authors, for instance Thomas (2011); Stake (1995, 2005), have argued that

generalizations cannot be drawn from case studies, while others such as Bassey (1999); Flyvbjerg (2004); Flyvbjerg (2006) and Hammersley et al. (2000), have argued that in drawing out similarities and differences within and between cases or case studies, researchers can make implicit claims to generalizations, especially if the cases are typical instances. Both lines of argument have merit and hold true depending on the type of case study and the process through which the study was carried out (Thomas, 2011).

In the context of the research being reported upon here, the cases were not selected as being typical of teachers in Nigerian classrooms. Sampling typical cases as a case study is a basis for generalizations as some of the aforementioned authors have argued. However, I was keener to sample participants who had the features of the phenomenon under study so as to provide an opportunity for learning something about developing inclusive practice in Nigerian classrooms (Stake, 2005; Thomas, 2011). I gave priority to the potential for learning in the sampling as against the search for the representativeness or the typicality of a case (Stake, 1995, 2005). Thus the sampling process, as will be discussed in the next section, was carried out on the basis of the theoretical ideas and information about the cases (Hammersley et al., 2000; Merriam, 2009).

Regardless of this, I also tried to achieve a balance in terms of male and female teachers, the location of schools, the types of schools and a mixture of subjects taught. Details of these are provided in section 4.4 below. Thus my research findings and conclusions are not generalizable, but I will argue that by focusing closely on the practice of each case teacher there are things that can be learnt from the knowledge that I have generated in this concrete, context dependent nature of practices. By focusing on real life situations and the details of practice, I was able to engage with the subtle differences between and across these teachers' practices. This enabled a process through which the varied nature of their practices can be explained (Flyvbjerg, 2001).

In explaining this potential in the use of case studies, Flyvbjerg (2001) argues that if a research study focuses on studying human interactions, which include human consciousness, human relationships and human affairs, there is a need for such

knowledge to be context sensitive and understood on the basis of its application to a particular context. It is when such knowledge is generated that prominence can be given to the process of social thought and actions, which are central to change in any political, social and economic developments in any given society (Flyvbjerg, 2001). I am convinced that my research provides the opportunity to develop such an understanding and knowledge of teachers' inclusive classroom practice. This understanding is developed is rooted in contextual examples of teachers' classroom practices. It can be used or drawn upon from (i.e. in application) by other teachers who might find themselves in similar circumstances (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Thomas, 2011).

4.4 Process of Sampling

The teachers that participated in this research were sampled on the basis that they exhibited some features/elements of interest to the research purpose and questions raised. In this regard, the participants were purposively sampled (Silverman, 2010). My aim was to interact with teachers who taught in inclusive classrooms with the aim of understanding how that experience was for them and what inclusive classroom practice meant for them on the basis of their actions in classrooms. What I sought throughout the entire sampling process were teachers whose practice was relevant and through their experience had direct reference to the research questions I had raised, my theoretical position and most importantly, to the understanding and explanation of the inclusive practice that was sought (Bryman, 2012; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011; Mason, 2002). To that effect, I set three main sampling criteria that guided me in deciding who became a research participant in my research project. The criteria for the selection of the participating teachers are outlined below.

Firstly, the schools where the teachers worked were regular mainstream schools in which all children, including children with disabilities are admitted; secondly, the case teachers had a child or children with disabilities in their classrooms; and thirdly the case teachers reflected at least some level of understanding that inclusive practice supersedes the mere presence of the child in the class, but leads to the presence, participation and

achievement of the child alongside their peers in the classroom (Ainscow et al., 2006; Booth et al., 2002; UNESCO, 2005).

With regard to the first criteria, the participants in this study were located in three schools (referred to as Gowon High School, Awolowo School and Azikiwe School). Azikiwe School offers a split site education to boys and girls located within the same vicinity. I worked with teachers between these two sites and I refer to them as a single school context in this report (i.e. Azikiwe School). Two of the school contexts (Awolowo School and Azikiwe School) were schools that I had known about since 2011, as I was referred to them whilst doing my Master's thesis. However, as I was only carrying out a single intrinsic case study¹⁰ I did not follow up on these leads until it was time to prepare for my field work for this Doctoral research.

I became aware of Gowon High School, which is government owned, while at Awolowo School. I explained to the resource person at the school that I was looking for more instances of inclusive practice that I could learn from based on the purpose of my research work. It was at that point that she referred me to another contact that led me to Gowon High School. I visited eight other schools to follow-up on recommendations. However, these schools did not meet my second and third criteria for inclusive practice.

On gaining access and being accepted into the three schools (an ethical issue that I will be addressing in section 4.6), with the help of the school heads or their deputies in some instances, I tried to locate those classes where there was a child (or children) with a disability. This then narrowed down the possible teachers who could participate to teachers teaching those classes. I had different experiences in the three school contexts. However, they all started by identifying those classes where children with disabilities were included. In two of the schools (Azikiwe School and Awolowo School), the school

¹⁰ An intrinsic case study is a case study in which the research focuses on a particular case to study in detail for a particular reason, due to its peculiarity or just for the purpose of satisfying the researcher's inquisitiveness (Stake, 2005; Thomas, 2011).

heads asked me to approach the teachers after letting me know which of the classes had children with disabilities included in them.

At Awolowo School, the school head pointed out some of the teachers that she felt had been with the school for a while and perhaps had built up experience over the years. She only made suggestions by indicating their subjects on the school timetable in her office. She then allowed me to follow-up whomever I wanted to on the basis on my interest and purpose. In Gowon High School and at Azikiwe School, the heads assigned another teacher to help me identify which of their teachers would fit the purpose of my study.

Having identified teachers that I was keen to include, I introduced myself and asked if they would like to participate in the research. I conducted an initial observation with all of the teachers I approached for consent. Through this initial observation, I decided on those that I wanted to be the main participants. My decision was initially influenced by the availability of the teacher within the period that I was in the school and the teacher's willingness to allow me to be a part of their classroom. I then decided on the 12 teachers to follow more closely on the basis of my observation of their practices. I followed up with casual discussions with the teachers after each class (i.e. for those I intended to continue with). If they were also interested I let them know that I intended to return to their classrooms with their consent. This was followed by us then discussing their timetables and agreeing on when I would be in their class again and possibly when I would conduct an interview after observing them for the set period of time. This created the opportunity for me to determine whether the second and third criteria set for sampling the participating teachers were met by that particular participant. This process was facilitated because I was introduced to all of the staff members as a researcher in staff briefings. These introductions provided a context for me to start the process of negotiating with prospective participants.

I am aware that by doing the above I ran the risk of the participants trying to read or interpret my interactions with them and then on that basis building up a response that

they thought might suit what I wanted to hear. This is because my interactions with them might influence their perception of who they thought I was and what they thought I wanted to know (Rubin & Rubin, 2005; Stake, 1995). To avoid such a scenario and because I wanted them to explain and express themselves in the research, I avoided expressing my personal opinions immediately after the classroom observations (as much as this was possible). Of course, doing this was not an easy task since some of the teachers asked about what I thought. Aware of this risk, I always told them that we would talk about it in more detail during the interview that we had scheduled. What I emphasized to them most at these initial stages was that they were the ones with the experience and that I was there to learn from them. Doing this allowed me some time to re-read my observation notes and reflect on each teacher's practice before the interviews without having to make quick evaluations and/or conclusions.

In the long run I had a mix of teachers from the private and public school contexts, including both males and females. I do believe that having a variety provided a mix that will enhance the in depth examination of each teacher's experience. These teachers all taught the last three years of basic education (i.e. JSS 1 – 3). I was in the field for a period of four months (5th September, 2013 – 10th January 2014), but the extensive data collection took place within a period of eight weeks (i.e. from 16th September – 15th November 2014). A time line of what occurred at what point in the research process, the order with which the teachers in a school were focused on, and a list of the case teachers are provided as Appendix D.

4.5 Method and process of data generation

To establish a line of inquiry and the robustness required for the in-depth data collection necessary for case studies, I employed two methods of data generation. These methods were semi-structured observations and semi-structured interviews. The methods were used in such a manner that they supported each other and enhanced my ability to develop a better understanding. Each method enriched the data that was being generated and enhanced my ability to further interpret the data as I engaged with the research

process (Flick, 2009b; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Ritchie, Spencer, & O'Connor, 2003). The observations were carried out prior to the interviews so that the information generated from each enriched and completed the knowledge and understanding that had already been generated by the other. My aim was to clarify meaning and draw out the multiple realities within which the research participants lived (Flick, 1998; Stake, 2005).

Observations and interviews are semi-structured when there is a predetermined guide that specifies what will be observed and the questions that will be asked during the interview (Patton, 2002). The observations and interviews that I carried out were semi-structured by the framework for participation and further informed by my reading of the literature on inclusive practice (chapter three). In Table 3 below, the number of observations and the length of the interviews are shown. The difference in the number of times each teacher was observed resulted from my dependence on the teacher's timetable. Some teachers had more slots on the timetable compared to other subjects. One of the teachers (Miss Hulda) who I had fewer opportunities to observe had problems with her timetable at that time so she could not give me a definite plan of her classes. This meant that sometimes when she was ready for a class, I already had an interview or observation arranged with another teacher.

Table 3: Table showing summary of research participants

(Indicating how many times each teacher was observed and the duration of the follow –up interviews)

S/NO	Name	Role in school	Lessons observed (40 minutes each)	Length of interview
Gowon High School				
1.	Mr. Gyang	Vice Principal Administration	nil	32 minutes
2.	Mr. Ameh	Teacher	nil	38 minutes
3.	Mrs. Adam	Teacher	4	32 minutes
4.	Mr. Jetur	Teacher	6	50 minutes
5.	Mr. Noah	Teacher	6	30 minutes
Awolowo School				
6.	Miss Elam	Vice principal Academics	nil	28 minutes
7.	Miss Sarah	Resource person	5 hours	30 minutes
8.	Mr. Absalom	Teacher	4	33 minutes
9.	Mr. Lotan	Teacher	3	31 minutes
10.	Mr. Weng	Teacher	4	33 minutes
11.	Mrs. Nehemiah	Teacher	3	25 minutes
12.	Mr. Othniel	Teacher	3	34 minutes
Azikiwe School				
13.	Mrs. Mandung	Principal	nil	14 minutes
14.	Mr. Nduka	Vice principal Academics	nil	29 minutes
15.	Mr. Seba	Teacher	4	37 minutes
16.	Miss Miriam	Teacher	4	32 minutes
17.	Mr. David	Teacher	3	43 minutes
18.	Miss Hulda	Teacher	2	47 minutes

Note: All names are pseudonyms for the purpose of anonymity

My initial plan was to work with these teachers concurrently over the period of the fieldwork. This was based on the initial assumption that I would be able to sample participants within the same location. I had also planned to conduct two interviews with each teacher. These initial plans did not work out as the schools and classrooms that were able to meet my set sampling criteria were located in two different cities. The distance between these cities and the cost of travelling between them disturbed that plan. I decided to spend two weeks at each school before moving to another school. I then spent most of the first week and part of the second week observing and then conducted the follow-up interviews towards the end of my time at the school. The order in which I went into these schools is also shown in Appendix D. In between these schools, I also had a break to catch up with typing up my observation notes and transcribing some of the interviews. This break was useful in that it enhanced my ability to start thinking about what the data was reflecting (Stake, 2010). All of this is reflected in Appendix D, where the outline of the research activities during the fieldwork and contextual information on the participating teachers is provided.

In my analysis and interpretation, I referred to the data generated through both methods. This was useful in enhancing my evolving understanding and provided a fuller picture of each teacher's practice (Patton, 2002; Ritchie et al., 2003). In doing the above, I also acknowledge that my decision to use these methods in such a manner was influenced by the nature of the research that I had read on inclusive classroom practice, especially in the field of inclusive practice. I learnt from other researchers in the field who have employed similar methods in their research.

4.5.1 Non-participant (semi – structured) observations

In this sub-section, I discuss the process through which I observed the participating teachers in their classroom. This section addresses three main issues: firstly, the kind of observations made and why I decided to use semi-structured non-participant

observations for the purpose of this research. Secondly, the section highlights some of the measures that I took to reduce the effects of my presence as another adult in the classroom. Thirdly, I discuss what my focus was while I observed and the type of notes that I made while observing.

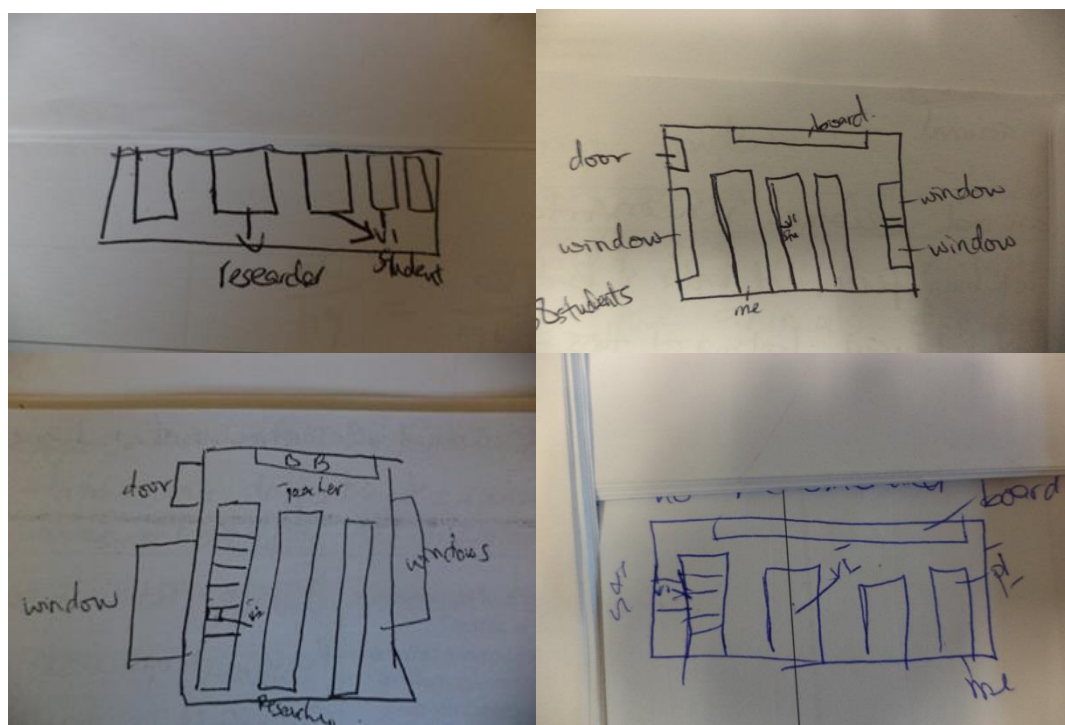
I decided to carry out non-participant observations because of the advantages they offered me and how these advantages met my specific research aims. Some of these advantages are: firstly, I was able to negotiate and indicate my identity as a researcher to all of the research participants. This was particularly important for me because I was aware that I was likely to have to gain access via the school authority, and this was indeed the case. I was therefore conscious of how I would have to negotiate the situation with the participating teachers in such a manner that they would become comfortable with my presence. I also wanted to avoid a scenario in which my research intentions were misinterpreted especially given that I was dependent on the school authority allowing me access in the first instance (Bryman, 2012; Hammersley & Traianou, 2012). Making my intentions clear was a priority in my decision to carry out non-participant observations.

The second important reason why I decided to make observations in which I was a non-participant member of the classroom community was because I wanted to create a research process in which I served as a kind of '*shadow*' to each participating teacher in order to witness their classroom practice first hand. By '*shadowing*' each participating teacher in this research I was able to just be there and take a backseat position, from where I could see and have a feel for what was going on in the classroom. It also provided me with the opportunity to make notes and generate 'live' data from the situations as they occurred naturally (Cohen et al., 2011; Denscombe, 2010).

Doing the above allowed me to be more focused on recording the teachers' activities, how the students responded in these activities and the classroom interactions, as they happened. I was fully engaged with the teaching and learning process as it progressed. I was able to do this without necessarily changing or interrupting the usual activities with

my presence. In Nigerian classrooms, two adults in a class is not a very common scenario except in nursery classes where the children are very young. The students in these classes were older. Remaining a non-participant was a better means of preserving the natural classroom setting of how things usually are in such classrooms (Denscombe, 2003; Mason, 2002). An example of a sketched classroom below indicates an example of where I normally positioned myself during an observation encounter. I drew sketches of most of the classes observed to remind me of the seating positions of the students, especially those students with disabilities, as well as the class settings while I was observing.

Figure 1: Example of sketches from classroom observation



In reference to my research objective, I needed to remain engaged with the research process and account for details, especially situated decisions and actions taken by the research participants at certain times. To a greater extent I think that taking notes and

being a non-participant observer helped to reduce the effects of my presence as a researcher in the classroom since I was taking notes just as most of the students were also doing (Gibbs, 2007; Patton, 2002; Robson, 2002). Therefore, my behaviour did not stand out as distinct from what the students were doing.

Although the observations were semi-structured in the sense that I had specific issues on which I was focusing based on the framework for participation (see table 2 in chapter three), the notes that I made in the classroom were largely narrative and descriptive, capturing the details of both the actions and activities of the teacher in the classroom, as well as the responses and activities of all of the students, but paying particular attention to how the teacher responded and worked towards including the children with disabilities in their classrooms. I also decided to capture the responses of the other students and their actions because as I have explained in chapter three, I was not only interested in the child with the disability, but also in the opportunities for learning provided for all and in how the child with the disability was provided with an opportunity to be a part of the classroom learning activities (Florian, 2007; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011).

An example of an observation sheet that I used in the note taking is reflected as part of Appendix E. Moreover, based on the framework for participation, I also needed to pay attention to issues such as the recognition and acceptance of children by children; who was accepted and who was not; and other issues that can only be identified and understood in the context of the interactions that took place in the classroom (Black-Hawkins, 2014).

My focus was thus on the teacher's actions in the classroom and the students' response as individuals in the class community and as members of the class community as a whole. I made notes and immediate records of what was happening and how it was happening during the classroom encounter. Although I always had a printed copy of the framework for participation to guide me in the main aspects of the classroom life that I needed to take notes of while observing, I remained flexible in building a narrative of

what was happening because classrooms are busy places. Limiting myself to using the framework in a checklist manner would have diminished the complexity and nature of social interactions that take place in a classroom. My use of semi-structured observation was to provide a focus that remained flexible so that the information that I was generating from classrooms would support and complement the interviews that I conducted later with each participating teacher (Cohen et al., 2011; Simpson & Tuson, 2003). My observations were immediately written down as handwritten notes. I later typed these notes into a word document. The process of typing was useful in that it helped me to elaborate more on the notes and through the process I developed questions that I wanted to ask each teacher during the interview (Patton, 2002; Robson, 2002).

Moreover, to help the research participants get used to my presence as an observer in their school context and to me being a part of their environment, I attended other activities such as school assemblies and staff briefings that I was invited to (two of the schools -Gowon High School and Awolowo High School- welcomed me to attend their staff briefings). I spent a considerable amount of time in the staff room and/or staff computer room. The manner in which I structured the process of data collection was that I spent time in one school context before proceeding to the next. While I was in a school I tended to stay for the duration of the school day. I had either an interview or an observation scheduled for each day with different teachers. In between these I did my personal work and completed my notes from the observations. This created opportunities for some interesting conversations especially with other teachers within the school. That helped me understand the context of the schools and provided some useful information that helped me to understand why some things happened in the way they did in the classrooms and the manner in which some of the teachers responded to certain issues (Robson, 2002; Smith, 1978).

I had initially planned to take photographs while observing, but I realized early on in the fieldwork that if I needed to be silent and less distracting in the classrooms, then taking photographs was not a good idea. The presence of my camera called attention and distracted the students. I also tried discussing this with one of the teachers and she

suggested that the children were young (between ages of 10 – 14) and could easily be distracted. Thus a camera in the class during the lesson was not a good idea if I wanted to be less disruptive. Instead of using newly generated photographs, I improvised with photographs that I generated from the internet on varied classroom situations. I will explain this process later in this section. These photographs were shown to the participating teachers to engender their comments on classroom practice. This was helpful in eliciting responses from participants.

I decided to improvise because the purpose of using photographs was to enhance the reflection on and the discussion of the experiences in practice. These discussions were not limited to the photographs but they led to discussions of practice that extended beyond what had been witnessed in the observations (Brown & McIntyre, 1993; Eraut, 2007; Prosser & Loxley, 2008). Moreover, I was confident in the sense that photographs have been used in a similar manner by Miles and Kaplan (2005) in their study of inclusive educational practices in a developing country context similar to Nigeria. They used photographs that were generated elsewhere to encourage teachers to reflect on inclusive classrooms. Their aim was to support the process of reflection, bearing in mind the predominant oral culture of their research context. It was with the same purpose that I wanted to include the photographs generated throughout my field-work process. Following the example of how Miles and Kaplan (2005) used photographs in their work, I decided to use photographs that I found on the internet to enhance the teachers' reflections on classroom learning.

What I did was to give the participants the photograph at some point during the interview (mostly when we had talked about what I had observed) and then asked them what they had observed or what their thoughts were looking at the different classroom scenarios in the pictures provided. This was useful in generating a response that helped in understanding how each of the participating teachers conceptualized or perceived how learning and teaching in classrooms should be. In two instances though, the participating teachers declined to comment on the photographs on the grounds that they were better off explaining from their own experience and stating what they thought practice was

about. An example of the photographs used is provided as part of Appendix E. Other details of the interview situations are discussed below in the section on interviews.

4.5.2 Semi-structured Interviews

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) describe research interviews as conversations in daily life that are also professional conversations because they involve an interchange of views (inter-views), in a process through which knowledge is constructed in the inter-action between the interviewer (the researcher) and the interviewee (the research participants). By their nature, interviews are social encounters in which speakers collaborate in producing retrospective (and prospective) accounts or versions of their past (or future) actions, experiences, feelings and thoughts (Rapley, 2004). It is the above inherent characteristics of interviews that made me decide to interview each of the research participants after observing their classroom practice. In the context of this research, the interviews started with a focus on the observations that had already been made. This often led to reflecting on and discussing issues that reflected the daily realities of the participating teacher's work. In using interviews, I was able to interact with the research participants and generate the data that has enabled me to develop an understanding of how teachers in Nigerian classrooms are developing inclusive practice (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Interviewing the research participants was also in line with the constructivist theoretical perspective, because the interviews were aimed at focusing on how each of the research participants experienced reality. Moreover, studies such as mine, which are principally aimed at understanding the descriptions and interpretations of others, with the purpose of representing these representations, multiple views and how different individuals experience reality, mostly tend to employ interviews in order to achieve these aims (Stake, 1995).

My purpose was to understand the nature of each of the case teacher's practice. In doing so, there are certain aspects of practice that are reflected in the framework for participation because they are necessary and must be explored if inclusive practice (on

the basis of how I have conceptualized it in this research) is to be effectively developed and implemented (Black-Hawkins, 2014). For this reason, I thought it necessary to develop my interview questions around these issues. This was to prevent the interview from becoming haphazard and dependent on any other issue that might not be necessarily relevant to understanding the nature and development of inclusive classroom practice. Since I had a limited time with each teacher, I needed to maximize that time to generate useful and meaningful data that would enhance my ability to address the research questions raised in this research project.

Prior to that, in order to ensure that the framework for participation was suitable in generating the type of data that would enable me address the research questions raised, I piloted the framework for participation in an interview with a teacher who has had experience in teaching in classrooms characterized by children with diverse learning needs. My aim in piloting the framework was to assess whether a teacher who has experience in teaching in a different context -i.e. outside the context in which the framework has been developed and used for research- could make sense of and relate to the issues reflected in it. This process was useful in that it enabled me to reflect on my interviewing skills, as well as giving me an insight into the practical decisions that I needed to make regarding how to manage the data that I would be generating (Cohen et al., 2011). I also made a number of decisions after this pilot interview. I will be discussing these decisions in chapter five in which I explain how the data generated was analysed.

Although the interviews were semi-structured, they were also guided by the issues that emerged from the previous discussions and observations with the teachers. This made the conversations during the interviews situational and contextualized to the classroom situations. I made the conversations flexible through the way in which I conducted the interviews, especially given the fact that I had noted down some specific questions for each participating teacher based on the data that I generated from my classroom observations (Robson, 2002). Applying these methods (i.e. observations and interviews) in this manner did not mean that I gave priority to either of the methods, nor did I think

that either of them was superior to the other. My aim in employing these methods in such a manner was to build trustworthiness into the data being generated and support the information and interpretations that I was beginning to attribute to the data I was generating. Doing so also provided me with the opportunity to start checking some of my initial interpretations with the participating teachers (Flick, 1998, 2009b).

Having said the above, I will also add that even though the interviews followed similar patterns they were conversational and situational because I wanted to capture the unique experiences and perceptions of each participating teacher. I made the interviews conversations situational and flexible to avoid being rigid or insisting on using the same words in all of the interviews simply because I wanted to be consistent with all of the participants (Arksey & Knight, 1999; Patton, 2002; Stake, 1995). My decision was based on my earlier explanation that teachers' practice is often determined by the situations in which they find themselves and the circumstances to which they have to give priority (Brown & McIntyre, 1993; Hatch et al., 2005). I therefore felt that it was also necessary for me to account for the situated-ness of their practice and the decisions they made while they were teaching (Alexander, 1996, 2001; Eraut, 2007).

Moreover, I thought that it was useful for a qualitative study to allow things to evolve if I wanted to maintain a balance between the actual experiences of the case teachers and the framework used to guide the study within the frame of the research paradigm in which I have situated this research. In other words, I also needed to be flexible to allow space for checking interpretations to ensure that they were not biased and restricted to a predetermined framework. An example of the specific questions added to the framework while interviewing the case teachers is presented as part of Appendix E. Each interview started with me asking about the background of the teacher, and the context in which they had previously worked, if they had a prior teaching experience, before their current school context. This helped in easing the interview situation and made both myself and the teacher being interviewed settle into the conversation properly (Patton, 2002; Silverman, 2011).

Notwithstanding my above stance and tactics, the interview situations did present some challenges. During one particular interview, I was almost drawing a conclusion based on a single comment. I had interacted with the teacher informally and had already observed his classroom. Towards the end of the interview he said that he would prefer a situation in which children with a disability had their own class or had their separate section in the classroom and where he did not have to carry them along with the others as is the case now. I immediately wondered why he would say such a thing. Did he not know that that takes him back to providing something different for children with disabilities? The next question that I asked in the interview, which could have led the conversation elsewhere was, *don't you think that that is special education in the middle of the class?* But as I spoke the words, I suddenly remembered that the aim of this interview was to develop an understanding of how things are and constructions of what reality is for the case teachers. Immediately shutting the interviewee up without allowing further explanation on what he said would not allow me to understand the situation and the context in which he was making such a comment. I quickly brought the conversation back to questions that were relevant to understanding why he thought this. This led to an understanding as will be discussed later in chapter seven where I discuss case teachers' understanding and knowledge of inclusive practice.

However, at the end of that interview, I kept wondering: Should I just write off this participant as not being inclusive? Does this one statement regarding providing something different disregard all that I had observed and that he had said? Did I miss something while sampling? But I had been to his class a couple of times. Was he pretending while I observed and in the other parts of the interview interactions? Looking closely at the entire interview conversation now and all of the data generated, I have realized that this particular statement, if interpreted in the context as I will be doing in the findings chapters, gives an understanding and insight into how things are for these teachers in Nigerian classrooms and the reality within which they are developing practice.

The above experience again drew my attention to the need to be more reflexive and continuously self-question my understanding as a researcher, the understanding of the research participants and the expectations of the field of inquiry within which the research would be reported. Reflecting throughout the research process helped me to keep an eye on all that was going on in the process and still remain focused on the research objective of understanding how things work for the research participants (Patton, 2002). Besides the above, there were a few more challenges that came up. I allowed the teachers to choose the interview location. I only explained to them that we needed somewhere quiet and where possible without distractions. I was willing to go wherever they were comfortable for the purpose of giving them some level of control over what was going to occur in the interview situation (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In one instance, the location was in a hall close to the school generator. I was slightly worried throughout the interview and hoped that the noise from the generator would not overshadow the interviewee's voice. Thankfully, the interview was captured well except that I had to endure the generator sound again while I was transcribing.

Then it came to the issue that I had committed myself to: talking about what I thought to some of the teachers who were asking for my feedback after their observations. With regard to this, it made me feel like I was there to evaluate them, a feeling that I was not particularly comfortable with, at least not at that stage of the research process. I had already thought through it before the interview and decided that I was going to hold on to the fact that I was the one learning from them as I had already told them after the observations. But if any of the participants persisted, I would keep my comments on a casual basis and focus on a scenario in the class, I would comment on what the students had done in this instance and not necessarily on the teacher's actions. I did this with some of the teachers that did remember to ask me after the interviews what I thought about their practice. I decided to do this because I thought that I needed to reflect on the information gathered before I could really make a genuine comment regarding what I thought about their experience of practice. In some instances, on a very casual note at

the end of the interview, the participants asked me why I was spending so much time carrying out this research, which to them seemed time consuming.

Moving on from the challenges of the interview situations, I will be addressing other practical issues associated with the use of interviews as a method of data generation. Each of the interviews lasted for about 30 – 40 minutes. In three instances, the interview exceeded 40 minutes and it was also less than 20 minutes on one occasion (with a school principal). This was because her phone rang a couple of times and I was too distracted by the continuous interruption to keep the conversation flowing longer than it did. The length of each interview was determined by the time available for the teacher concerned. I conducted the interviews in English (which is the official language of teaching and learning in Nigeria). This was to enhance their confidence through being in a familiar environment and language (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

I audio recorded all of the interviews (with the consent of each participant) to capture the exact words of the interviewees. I then transcribed each interview afterwards. I audio recorded the interviews to help in recording all of the details and to avoid being too distracted by trying to write down every bit of the conversation while it was still ongoing (S. Kvale, 1996; Opdenakker, 2006; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). During the transcription I also made notes and noted down insights and ideas that came to mind regarding what was happening. Self-transcription by a researcher of qualitatively generated data, Gibbs (2007) and Robson (2011) argue, is the starting point of analysis as it not only enables the researcher to become familiar with the research data but also starts the process of reflecting on possible interpretations. The transcripts were returned to the participants and they were asked to make contact if there were any issues of concern or areas of doubt arising from them. I did this by emailing the transcripts if the participant had an email address and by posting others where the participant had no email address. I had already explained to them that I was going to be sending the transcripts to them afterwards and that the transcripts were just raw data and were yet to be interpreted. None of the research participants made any corrections to their interview transcripts.

Following on from the fact that the interviews I carried out were aimed at establishing, enriching and supporting the data being generated through my observations, I also interviewed a member of the school's administrative team in each of the schools. This was to support and provide a context for the information being generated from the participating teachers. At Gowon High School and Awolowo School, I also interviewed their resource person. At Azikiwe School, they did not have a 'trained' or specific resource person since they are in close proximity to a resource centre that supports their students when the need arises. I was able to visit the resource centre before leaving the school. I also had informal and prolonged conversations with a few other teachers. These teachers mostly taught in the same class as the case teachers. Some of these interactions were also audio recorded and I went on to observe some of these teachers' classes too. I decided to do all the above for the purpose of generating any information that could enhance my understanding of the issues on the ground (Denzin, 1970; Schwandt, 2001). The information generated during these conversations I found very useful while I was analysing and trying to understand the practices of the participating teachers. I often found myself going back to read them to fill in some of the gaps in what the case teachers had said or done.

4.6 Ethics

In planning this research, I found the British Educational Research Association's (BERA) guidelines (BERA, 2011) useful in thinking about the issues that I needed to address. These guidelines were complemented by the process of considering and responding to the ethical requirements of carrying out research at Moray House School of Education at the University of Edinburgh. However, having had a previous acquaintance with the guidelines when carrying out my Master's research here in the UK and from other relevant literature such as Hammersley (2009) and Dingwall (2008), I was aware of some of the tensions in implementing and strictly adhering to these guidelines especially if the research is situated in a different country context and its findings are expected to be reported here in the UK from where the guidelines originate.

In the paragraphs that follow, I address issues regarding how I gained access to the research context; how I was accepted by the research participants; how I ensured the confidentiality and anonymity of all of the participants; how I avoided instances of posing a potential risk to the participating teachers; and how I established a sense of responsibility towards my research participants through the research process (Stutchbury & Fox, 2009). All of these issues were addressed based on the circumstances at hand while in the field (Dingwall, 2008; Hammersley, 2009). I am in agreement with the argument that decisions made within the context of each research study provide the basis upon which the research process can be judged as being either right or wrong, good or bad, transparent or morally defensible (Denscombe, 2010; Stutchbury & Fox, 2009).

In discussing the process through which the participating teachers were sampled, I stated how I gained access to the schools and the participating teachers. What I did was to post a letter of request to the School authority. Also attached to this letter, was a summary of my proposed research on a sheet of paper and some flyers that provided more information on issues such as what the research comprised; how the teachers would be involved; how I would be involved in the process and for how long. The information sheet was always the same but I made minor modifications to suit the information that I already had about the specific school context. This was to ensure that each school was fully aware of my intentions and what the research would involve (Cohen et al., 2011). An example of this is presented in Appendix F. My initial visit to each of the school contexts involved a discussion with the school head. I was introduced to the school community afterwards before proceeding to sample participating teachers.

While sampling, I sought the consent of all of the participating teachers. The BERA guidelines stipulate that research participants are expected to give written consent before participating in any given research project (BERA, 2011). I had prepared consent forms to issue to all of the participants prior to going to the field. However, in preparing those forms, I was also aware of the need to be culturally sensitive to the situations on the

ground (Dingwall, 2008). Doing research in a developing context, especially in Africa where the predominant method of communicating is oral, I was aware of the expectation and accepted norm that if someone gives you his/ her word then you are to count on it. Insisting on evidence of an agreement, such as signing my consent forms, might lead to suspicions about my true intentions in carrying out the research. Bringing in a consent form and insisting that it must be signed is culturally insensitive to the context of practice especially if the person concerned is older or in a position of authority. I remembered that during previous research work (i.e. my Master's thesis), I had given out consent forms and the research participants had declined to sign them on the basis that they had given me their word and they did not see why I also needed a signature. Similar instances have been reported in research in other contexts where insisting on a signature led to distrust and suspicion that the researcher was holding back information from the participants. This situation led to the eventual withdrawal of the access already granted for that research purpose (Dingwall, 2008).

I was also aware of the fact that the process through which I gained consent was pertinent to how I was going to start the research relationship with the participating teachers, since it was the foundation upon which other ethical issues in the research would follow (Cohen et al., 2011; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In this situation, and knowing that I wanted to assure the teachers that I was not evaluating them in order to pass judgement on them, and that I was not recording them in ways that the school authority could track them if anything came up, I went ahead and obtained oral consent. I declined to offer the consent forms to all of the research participants. Having made this decision, I decided to make the process of gaining consent a continuous process in which I continuously negotiated the social situations rather than making the act of gaining an informed consent a one-off activity at the start of the research (Gokah, 2006; Harrison, MacGibbon, & Morton, 2001).

I made this decision on the grounds that building and gaining the confidence of the participants was more important to me for the purpose of this research process than

providing paper evidence to show that the research participants had given their consent. Insisting on signed consent could have influenced the nature of the participants' responses or actions during the research period. I did not want to risk making the participants feel the need to say the right thing or act in the right way because they had signed an agreement; I wanted them to express what their experience actually meant for them (Robson, 2002).

Furthermore, discussing with the teachers and explaining things orally also helped in building on the research relationship which was necessary for the interviews that followed later (Cohen et al., 2011). After the initial meetings and agreeing on a timetables with the participant, I always asked for consent before each observation and interview interaction. I took all of these measures to ensure that the participants comprehended what was happening and were making rational judgments; they were aware of all that the research entailed and that they could withdraw from the process at any time (BERA, 2011; Homan, 1991). Throughout the research process I weaved in the process of gaining consent by making it continuous (Dingwall, 2008; Gokah, 2006).

I have used pseudonyms in this thesis in order to anonymize all of the research participants. I have not mentioned the specific locations (state or city) of the schools to avoid making information available that could lead to the identification of the schools and possibly the teachers. All of these issues relate to the general and broader level of anonymity (Cohen et al., 2011; Stutchbury & Fox, 2009). With regard to confidentiality of the information generated, I was the only one who had access to all data. Within the school context, I decided to interview the administrative staff early on while in the school to avoid a situation where they could ask about what I had observed with their teachers. I wanted to avoid a scenario in which I would risk undermining the confidentiality that I had assured the teachers. I did not want to inadvertently provide opportunities for unintended consequences for any teacher after the research process (Hammersley & Traianou, 2012). I am confident that a general sense of responsibility was also established in how I interacted with all of the research participants. This is

based on my decision to go along the route that established their trust while trying to gain access and acceptance, as well as going with what they were more comfortable with, in deciding at what time and where the interviews should be held (BERA, 2011; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

4.7 Quality in qualitative research

Flick (2009a, 2009b) asserts that the problem of how to assess qualitative research in order to ascertain its quality has not yet been solved. This problem, Flick (2009a) adds, has repeatedly been taken up as an argument in order to raise general questions about the legitimacy of findings from qualitative research. The threats to the quality of qualitative research that exist are usually pinned down to certain factors. Even though these factors serve as threats to the quality of a given qualitative research study, they cannot be completely identified and eliminated, but their effects can be lessened by paying particular attention and incorporating deliberate actions that can enhance the quality of a particular piece of research (Cohen et al., 2011). In view of the above lines of argument, I discuss the measures that I have taken and built into the research process to enhance its quality.

Several authors have suggested how researchers can enhance the quality of their qualitative research. Robson (2002) for instance identified some potential threats to the quality of any given qualitative research. These threats include: not recording evidence while the research is ongoing; bias from the part of the researcher and the research participants; imposing a fixed framework on the research process without allowing issues to speak for themselves and the effect of the presence of the researcher. Lincoln and Guba (1985) in their text also suggest terms such as trustworthiness, credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability as criteria a researcher can use to ascertain the quality of their qualitative research. Others such as Seale (1999a) add that the quality of a qualitative research study can be enhanced by a researcher providing the readers of the research report with a reflexive account of their positions, leaving the

readers with the democratic power and process of deciding where there are clashes of interest in the research process.

In all these criteria listed above, I find the criteria presented by Lincoln and Guba (1985) comprehensive in the context of my research. This is because the terms they use cover what some of these other authors have suggested. Moreover, most of these authors often refer back to Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria in one way or another. For instance, the criterion of trustworthiness includes activities such as prolonged exposure to the field and persistent observations. Robson (2002) also discusses these processes as measures that researchers can employ to reduce the effects of the presence of a researcher in a research context. Another example is their use of the criterion confirmability. Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue this can be included in a research work by the researcher being reflexive of the process through which the research was carried out. This is in line with Seale's (1999a) assertion above. Below, I explain how I applied some of these processes while carrying out this particular research.

I have explained how the different 'I's' of who I am as the researcher played out in the research process. This was to highlight my research intentions, as well as to acknowledge my beliefs and experiences as the researcher. I have also acknowledged my role as the researcher being a key instrument in the research process (Cohen et al., 2011; Simons, 2009). I believe this process meets that criterion of confirmability as recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Additionally, having located this research within a social constructivist research paradigm, I have acknowledged that my values, background, experiences, priorities, actions and positions as the researcher played a role in the research process (Creswell, 2013; Guba, 1990; Searle, 1996). There was a process of interaction that generated the data used in this research.

I acknowledge that the outcome of the research reported in this report in the chapters that follow is the result of a process of interpretation that was an iterative and reflexive negotiation between my conceptualisation of practice as discussed in Chapter three and the perspectives and understanding of practice as presented by the teachers that

participated in this study. As the researcher, in order to effectively understand the context of these teachers' practice, I had to immerse myself in their classrooms and thus cannot claim that I was entirely separated from the research process (Charmaz, 2014; Guba, 1990).

To establish the trustworthiness of the research process and the data being generated, I carried out a non-participant observation that enabled me to capture events in my notes as they occurred. All interviews were audio-recorded to avert the risk of losing important aspects of the interview conversations. I also employed the use of two methods of data generation. These methods were used in such a way that they supported each other, provided more information, and enhanced my understanding of what the experience of inclusive education is for each of the research participants. Moreover, my continuous presence in the school context and repeat observations with case teachers was not only useful in ascertaining the reality for each of the participating teachers, but also provided me with more access to relevant sources of information through my interaction with other members of the school community. I believe this reduced the effect of my presence in the classrooms that were observed (Denscombe, 2010; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Robson, 2002).

Further, I also attended some of the general school activities such as assemblies and in some instances staff briefings and spent extended periods of time in each school besides the time spent observing and interviewing. Moreover, in carrying out interviews after observing I was able to establish some level of rapport with the participants before the actual interviews, thus reducing their bias or the effect of the research process on them (Robson, 2002; Stake, 1995). These above strategies to enhance trustworthiness suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) were useful and applicable to my research context.

I have explained how the observations were carried out and how they further informed interview interactions. Issues were allowed to evolve and emerge progressively during the period of data collection and analysis. The framework for participation served as a

tool that guided and not as a fixed or checklist tool in the research process (S. Kvale, 1996; Stake, 2010). Even though my process of analysis was predominantly approached through a process of deductive reasoning, I remained open and responded to the data, thereby making changes and adjusting the framework in such a manner that it reflected the data generated.

With regards to the dependability and transferability of a research process, Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend that a research report should be able to provide a trail of the process through which the research was carried out. The sole aim of this chapter is to provide the necessary details of how I carried out this research. I have provided this trail to reflect how situations such as interview situations and access were negotiated for the purpose of bringing to life and explaining some of the situations within which data was generated (Seale, 1999a, 1999b).

Credibility, Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue is justified by cross checking information and interpretations with research participants. In this regard, apart from returning the interview transcripts to all participants, I only returned to one school to interact further with some of the teachers. I cannot claim that I was carrying out a cross check of interpretations in its fullest sense. Cross checking the interpretations with research participants comprises a process in which research participants are requested to examine the data generated and the interpretations made. In such instances, participants' perspectives are usually accepted as the real interpretation, which take precedence over that of the researcher (Stake, 1995). Such processes are commonly applied to studies that are based on a phenomenological research paradigm. They are also applied in research work that aims to spur a specific group of people into action. Neither of these was my research aim or the paradigm in which I have located this research work. I therefore did not necessarily follow through with a full cross check of the interpretations in this particular research because I did not at any point or in any way suggest to all the research participants that I was going to be adhering strictly to their perspectives when reporting my research (Mero-Jaffe, 2011; Scotland, 2012).

Taking the above decision and stance in this research does not necessarily mean that I have undermined the ability of my research participants to interpret their reality. I do acknowledge that given the time, resources and opportunity, contacting case teachers at this stage of the interpretations could have perhaps added to my claims of authenticity in my interpretations and findings. However, as I have argued in Chapter three and in explaining my role in this research process, I am acknowledging my place and the role that I played in making sense of these research participants' reality in light of an existing theoretical context (Silverman, 2011). I have to the best of my ability based the findings reported in this thesis on the data generated in order to provide an authentic reflection of the participants' experience of the reality of inclusive classroom practice (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). All the measures that I took aimed to provide a convincing basis upon which the findings reported in this research can be considered as worth paying attention to or taking into consideration (Robson, 2002).

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the process through which the data generated were analysed and the results that emerged from the process. The chapter is divided into seven main sections. Section 5.2 below provides an overview of how I approached the process of data analysis. This is followed, in section 5.3, by a discussion of the preliminary stages of data analysis that I engaged with while still generating data. In sections 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6, I explain the three different stages in which I analysed the data generated. Section 5.7 explains the structure and the manner in which the findings that emerged from the process of analysis are presented. Throughout each of these sections I state the outcome that emerged from each process.

5.2 Approach and strategy

I analysed the data generated through a combination of a deductive and an inductive approach to qualitative data analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994). My approach to the data analysis was predominantly deductive because I already had a set of theoretical issues, based on the conceptual and theoretical framework that I used to understand the data. I looked out for these issues across the entire data set generated through observing and interviewing all of the research participants. But while I was mostly guided by these predetermined ideas, I remained open to new issues that were emerging from the data set. This made up the inductive aspect of my data analysis (Boyatzis, 1998; Gibbs, 2007). Often, qualitative researchers refer to these processes as the concept/ theory-driven or data-driven process of analysis respectively (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Gibbs, 2007; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Robson, 2011). The framework for participation

(Black-Hawkins, 2014) was used as a theoretical framework to guide both the process of data generation and the analysis. In using the framework for participation, I made changes to certain aspects of it to ensure that the reality of what was in the data was captured through the research process (Gibbs, 2007; Gilgun, 2011; King, 1998, 2004; Miles & Huberman, 1994). While the framework informed and guided the process, the process through which I adapted it and changed it in response to the data also added to the inductive aspects of the data analysis. Through this iterative process, I paid attention to what I needed to know, what the data was reflecting and how these related to each other (if they did) and why this was so (Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009).

Following my approach to the data analysis, I decided against the use of any specialist software such as Nvivo. Knowing that I was using a theoretical framework in understanding the data, I wanted to be more closely engaged with the data through the process of analysis (Luker, 2008). This decision, I believe, enabled me to become extremely familiar with my data through all of the stages of analysis and also enhanced my ability to critically challenge some of the assumptions underpinning the framework for participation. This process addressed the concern of being bias, a critique usually raised when researchers using predetermined frameworks in analysing their data (Boyatzis, 1998; King, 2004; Miles & Huberman, 1994). In this regard, the data analysis was carried out in three main stages. A summary of these stages is presented as a diagram in Appendix G. Prior to these three stages, I undertook a preliminary stage in which I prepared the data.

5.3 Getting started – *The preliminary stage*

Once in the field and observing, I began to reflect and read through my observation notes in order to generate questions that were specific to each case teacher's context of practice. I did this so that I could add these observations into the interview questions. This was to make the questions relevant to the specific circumstances while interviewing each of the research participants (Patton, 2002; Robson, 2002). This process also involved me writing a reflection of what happened in the field each morning. I was able

to reflect better in retrospect on how things had gone overall the previous day and any specific decisions that I made with regards to the research process. I made notes of that too (this was different from the formal observations already discussed in the sections on the methods of data generation above) (Bodgdan & Bilklen, 2003). Doing this supported my thinking through what was happening in the research context. I also developed a timetable in which I kept track of my activities. These actions marked the start of the early stages of my analysis of the data (Gibbs, 2007).

At the same time, I began to develop my observation notes by typing out each class observation in detail. I also listened to the interviews with the teachers to help me identify whether there was anything I needed to raise or pay particular attention to as the study progressed (Stake, 2010). This process supported my reflection on what was happening in the data that had already been generated. Once an opportunity presented itself, I transcribed the interviews. Doing this also alleviated the feeling of being overwhelmed by the transcriptions after the fieldwork (S. Kvale, 1996; Miles & Huberman, 1994). While transcribing, I made notes of important issues. Once I realized that I have not specifically raised some of these issues with the teachers at Awolowo School, I returned to that school on an arranged visit and had a group conversation with some of the participating teachers. This was to cross-check some of my initial interpretations of what I thought the data was beginning to reflect. This process of cross-checking the information was aimed at achieving a balance and checking some of my interpretations with the reality of the participating teachers. It was more about clarifying and expanding for the purpose of enhancing my developing understanding of how things do work (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Stake, 2010).

Once I had finished generating the data, I continued with the transcriptions and developing notes from the classroom observations. I was able to develop a complete data set afterwards. I had these records on my personal computer and saved back-up copies both on an external hard drive and a pen-drive that was accessible only by me. I then made duplicate copies of all of the data. It was at this stage that I changed all of the names to pseudonyms and created a separate record that linked the original names to the

pseudonyms. I also assigned a serial number to each participant for easy filing, identification and retrieval from both the computer and office folders. Initially I referred back to these until I became acquainted with the pseudonym assigned to each participant (Cohen et al., 2011; Flick, 2009a; Ruona, 2005).

In transcribing the interviews and writing up my observation notes, I focused more on the content of what was being said and done. My decision to focus on the content of the data was because my research focuses on the factual content of the data and not on the details of expression and the use of language. Moreover, on the basis of my planned process of data analysis, I was aiming to carry out an analysis in which, to begin with, codes and themes would be identified (Gibbs, 2007; Robson, 2011). I resolved to transcribe everything including grammatical errors, repetitions and incomplete utterances in the first instance. I did this because any attempt to edit while transcribing proved not only time consuming but also meant that I was beginning to add my interpretation into transcripts. I decided to represent interruptions and a sudden change in the focus of the discussion with three dots (...) while transcribing. The advantage of this was that when reading through the transcripts, it was easy for me to remember the interview situation and the participant's presentation of themselves once I came across those interruptions and repetitions (Gibbs, 2007; Silverman, 2006).

It was only between the second and third stages of the data analysis that I effectively began to edit out incomplete statements and effected grammatical changes where necessary. By this stage, I had developed an understanding of the data in context and was sure that these statements did not influence the meaning and understanding of the data that had been developed (Bryman, 2012). I structured the transcripts to allow for sufficient margins at both ends of the document. Paragraphs were numbered to allow the easy location of specific data (Cohen et al., 2011; Flick, 2009a). Having done the above, I am not in any way claiming that I was effectively able to produce perfect transcripts, as claiming this is an illusion. I only aimed at producing what was relevant and fit for the purpose of achieving the objective of the research (Gibbs, 2007; Silverman, 2006).

I printed out hard copies of the data to commence the next stage of the data analysis. Throughout the process of analysis, hard copies of the data were kept in files in my secured office or taken home where only I had access to them.

5.4 Gaining insights - Stage 1

At the outset of this stage, I had already read through my data a couple of times and had become thoroughly familiar with the entire data set and the framework for participation (Gibbs, 2007; Simons, 2009). My overall analytic approach was significantly influenced by the work of King (1998, 2004); Miles and Huberman (1994) and Ritchie et al. (2003). I drew insights from these qualitative data analysis texts and the rich examples provided by these authors on how to develop a codebook prior to coding any given data set.

Using the framework for participation (Black-Hawkins, 2014) and referring back to its original version (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007), where detailed aspects of practice that researchers can focus on are stipulated, I developed a codebook with which I began the process of coding the entire data set. As part of appendix H I have included a copy of this index of codes, which I used as a guide to develop my own initial codebook. The codebook I developed comprised a code, its definition, and a statement on when to apply it and when not to apply it, and an example of an instance where the code has been used (See Appendix H section 1, which is an extract from the codebook). The process that I engaged with was akin to how DeCuir-Gunby, Marshall, and McCulloch (2011) and MacQueen, McLellan, Kay, and Milstein (1998) developed their codebooks in their respective research. However, I was aware that these authors, and others such as Miles and Huberman (1994), discuss such processes in the context of a research project embarked upon by a group of researchers. I was a sole researcher, but I found the process that they applied and their use of codebooks with stipulated features useful in remaining consistent when applying each code across the data set (i.e. across the participants and with each case teacher). This process forms part of stage two in Appendix G in this thesis.

I applied the developed codes to the data generated from three selected case teachers (one from each school context). I coded for both the manifest and the latent content meaning (Boyatzis, 1998), in a process of line by line coding of the data (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Gibbs, 2007). In paying attention to the manifest meaning of the data, to begin with I paid attention to the explicit meaning of what the participants said and did. I did not try to draw out meaning beyond what was explicit at the initial stages of coding. This process of coding for the manifest meaning constituted the descriptive process of my data analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). With the continuous process of coding and reviewing the codes, I progressed to the latent meaning of the data. In doing this, my focus shifted towards understanding the underlying ideas, assumptions, conceptualizations and ideologies that might have underpinned what the participants had said or done in the course of the data generation. Paying attention to these ideas and underlying assumptions led to the development of the connections and relationships between the codes, themes and categories at the later stage of analysis. They also further informed the coding process and the manifest meaning already identified (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

This process led me to revise the codes based on new codes that were emerging inductively from the data, and to redefine or rename some of the pre-defined codes to fit the data. A second version of the codebook was then applied to the interviews with members of the schools' administration and resource persons. Through this second phase of coding, I learnt more; the coding became more focused (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This process led to a further revision: merging and/or defining the codes and what they stand for, as well as creating new codes as required. This was a continuous process of revision (King, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994). By the time I was coding the data generated from the other teachers (i.e. after the first three teachers and the interviews with resource persons and the school administrator) my codebook was fully developed. I only added about two more codes to reflect issues that had not already been captured by the previous codes (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

5.5 Making sense - Stage 2

Once I had finished coding and gone through the entire data set, I developed a code and extract table for the case teachers in each school context (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Ruona, 2005). I did this by creating a duplicate copy of the data (as soft copies) and then following the coding on the hard copies. I cut and pasted data chunks into the table beside each code. A code was on each row and each teacher, resource person and administrative staff occupied a column. An example of an extract from such a table is attached as Appendix I. Developing this table enabled me to look at instances across each case and within a case but across all codes. These tables were particularly useful for me because they enhanced my ability to start seeing the existing patterns of practice with teachers within a school and across schools. They also enabled me to begin to identify patterns of practice that were peculiar or different within and across school contexts. I used these tables as a strategy to display my data (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Ritchie et al., 2003).

The above process produced three tables (each containing data from the participants in a school context). I printed out these tables and read through them with three objectives in mind. First, I was re-reading across cases within each code to check the consistency with which I had applied the codes to the data chunks. This led to reshuffling, collapsing some codes into one and rearranging some data chunks in line with my codebook definitions (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Secondly, using coloured markers, I marked out positive examples and positive aspects of the case teachers' practices, as well as negative examples or instances of case teachers' practices to differentiate between them. For example, if a child with a disability was accepted and recognized by their peers, this was marked in green. When there was an instance where they were not accepted and recognized by their peers this was marked in pink (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Day, 1993). My third objective in reading through the tables was to identify what was reflected in each data chunk. For instance, a code for the data on teachers' attitudes towards children with disabilities in

their classrooms might have the teacher reflecting positive attitudes and acceptance at some points and indifference others. The issues identified began to form my emerging patterns (Ritchie et al., 2003). A photograph of a page reflecting these processes is presented in Appendix J.

During the above process I continuously made notes and reflected on what I thought was happening in the data with each case teacher, with teachers in each school context and across the cases in the three different school contexts. The relationships between these codes were also emerging and I began to see how I needed to rearrange the codes compared to how they were initially arranged in the framework for participation (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Robson, 2011; Simons, 2009).

On the basis of these processes, I developed a final codebook; data display tables; a codes and patterns table; and a table for each code and all of its dimensions/patterns (as separate documents). The codebook and the data display table reflected the new relationships and codes in their hierarchy of categories, themes and codes. I also developed a mind-map at the end of this stage to capture these networks, relationships and the hierarchy clearly, so that they could be seen at a glance (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Robson, 2011; Taylor & Gibbs, 2010). These are all reflected in Appendix K. Throughout this process, I always made duplicate copies, dated the work and backed-up all of the documents just as I had done for the initial data in the process that I described in stage one of the data analysis.

Eventually, by the end of stage one of the data analysis, the codebook comprised three categories, eleven themes and thirty three codes. These are all presented in Appendix L. Comparing the structure of the categories, themes and codes in Appendix L to the framework for participation presented in Table 2 in chapter three, it can be observed that there are differences between them. The main difference is that in the initial framework for participation there are four main sections (i.e. categories). Through the process of analysis I merged two of the categories together to become a single category. This was the result of how the data interrelated and were connected with each other. The

participation and achievement section and its elements in the framework for participation evolved and became part of the participation and collaboration section.

5.5.1 Merging section in the framework for participation

The main difference between the final structure of the framework (see Appendix L) to the original structure of the framework (see table 2), is a move from four sections to three following the merge of the sections on ‘participation and achievement’ with ‘participation and collaboration’. This was the result of how the data generated interrelated and connected with each other. My decision to merge these categories was grounded on how my understanding of the data evolved.

In examining the data through stage two of the data analysis, it became apparent that the case teachers’ understanding of the elements of participation and achievement, such as how they supported everyone’s learning; using formative assessment; and regarding progress as an everyday expression, were embedded in their discussion of classroom practices. When case teachers reflected on how they knew that all of the children in their classrooms were learning together (an element of participation and collaboration), there was also a reflection on the practices that they engage with in order to support everyone’s learning (an element of participation and achievement). This pattern was evident with seven case teachers. An instance of this is seen in the interview extract below:

...And then involvement, involve them, and then each time you give them work you check their work assuming they are writing notes. You know, I cannot read Braille, ehen I cannot read Braille. But each time I give them notes I ask Josephine have you copied your note? ... Where is it? Let me see it. So each time Josephine knows that there is agric [i.e. Agricultural Science] lesson she must make sure that all her things are ready because I will ask her. So any reasonable teacher should have that one in mind. Give the blind candidate more time. That is why even in exams though they are writing the same exams and the same questions, the blind candidates have more time ... Whenever any exams are involved and blind candidates are involved, you give the blind candidates more time. (Mr. David)

In the above extract, Mr. David describes what he does in his class to ensure that all of his students are actually part of the activity that they are all expected to be doing. His attention to the student's actions, (even when he is unable to fully comprehend the student's own work), is what he sees as a means of supporting the student in her own learning while also learning alongside the others. While observing Mr. David in the class in which this particular student was, I observed that the student in this instance was involved and responded to the class activities, in the same way as the other students without visual impairments, without prompting from Mr. David. He also explained this in the context of other practices such as flexibility in timing tasks or examinations.

It is within this context that I think that supporting everyone's learning in terms of flexible practices, valuing different forms and levels of progress, and teachers' expectations of students' progress is closely linked to and embedded in the process of supporting students to learn together. Supporting students to learn together is a major aspect of participation and collaboration. Once I had made the above decision, the overlaps between the codes and data extracts were reduced. The overlap mainly had to do with the same data extracts being coded and placed within two different codes. This meant a refining of the codebook definition to ensure that it captured this decision.

For the other five case teachers, with whom this pattern of data was not significantly evident, I looked more closely to understand why this was the case. Three of these teachers were from Gowon High School. There were fewer examples of how they ensured that their students were learning together compared to the other teachers. This difference, I attributed to the larger class sizes that they had to manage. This was not a surprising observation as previous evidence has indicated that teachers with bigger class sizes have more issues to address. These issues include having a wider variety of needs to attend to and using more time for class management. This usually minimizes a teacher's ability to pay attention to their students at an individual level (Blatchford, 2009; UNESCO, 2014). While class size explains this disparity in the occurrence of this pattern, it is also important to note that class size as a single factor does not determine the learning processes and the teacher's classroom practice (Blatchford, 2003, 2009;

Frost & Little, 2014; Hoxby, 2000). Some of these other factors that determine teachers' practices, I will address later in chapters six and seven.

In merging these sections of the framework for participation, I was also aware that the evidence for each of the elements was not equal. There was more evidence on elements such as the use of formative assessment and flexibility in determining progress. This prompted a return to the literature to enable me to understand how to make sense of the evidence that I had generated. Within the literature that informed this research process, learning and achievement are linked together because of the understanding that learning leads to progress and development. These processes are embedded and interlinked in the daily and continuous interactions between teachers and students in classrooms (Claxton, 2007; Hayward, 2014; Lave, 1996). This is very similar to how Black-Hawkins (2014) conceptualizes and presents the notion of achievement in the current version of the framework for participation. Achievement, in the work that Black-Hawkins has been a part of, is seen as the progress that has been made or the change that has taken place compared to a particular starting point (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007).

However, I think that if progress as a result of learning processes is seen differently and focused on as a separate aspect of teaching and learning, there will be a tendency that this will continue to sustain the inclusion and achievement debate. The debates centre on the fact that if achievement is seen as an outcome of teaching and learning, then the presence of children with a disability can hinder the attainment of the expected levels of achievement for the other children in that classroom (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007; Dyson et al., 2004).

Even though progress and development in learning can be assessed over a period of time to determine the overall progress made, in the context of this research and on the basis of the nature of data that was generated, the nature of the assessment of progress in learning embedded in the data was more focused on assessment as a means of informing learning and supporting progress in learning through classroom activities (Claxton, 2007, 2009; Hayward, 2014). The above ties in more closely with participation and

collaboration in terms of supporting everyone's learning and recognizing various forms of progress, as reflected in Appendix L.

In doing this, the question of whether learning and achievement need to be treated as separate categories or sections in the framework for participation presented by Black-Hawkins (2014) or whether they need to be brought together as a single category as part of the continuing effort towards encouraging teachers in inclusive classrooms to utilize the information gained through assessing progress to inform, support, encourage and direct learning activities (Hayward, 2014), has been raised. I will argue that participation and collaboration and participation and achievement can be merged together in order to enhance teachers', as well as researchers' thinking in ways that the process of teaching is seen as a whole that comprises all of these elements intertwined together. This is a process that can enhance a shift in thinking within the system of education towards a focus on assessment for the purpose of supporting learning, as against a focus on assessment of learning after a set period of time, in order determine achievement.

5.5.2 *Concluding stage 2 of data analysis*

After I had done all of the above, I was not learning anything new from the data. I had reached a point of saturation and it was time to start making sense of the case teachers' inclusive classroom practice (Neuman, 2003). In discussing the use of predetermined codes and ideas in coding, as I have done, King (1998) cautions the researcher at this stage of the data analysis:

"...you must remember that the template (i.e. having a final set of categories, themes and codes arranged in hierarchy) is not the end product of the analysis, but only a tool to help you produce an interpretation of the data that does as much justice as possible to its richness within the constraint of a formal report, paper or dissertation. The way you interpret your data should be shaped by the aims of your study and the nature of the data itself; there is no set of hard-and-fast- procedural rules to follow..."

I had deconstructed the data, and challenged myself to make sense of it and how it interrelated. It was time to move on to further sense making through interpretation (Chenail & Maione, 1997; Day, 1993).

Guba (1990) and Somekh (2012) argue that for educational researchers, it is important that the interpretations presented in a research report are based on a systematic searching of the data and a reconstruction of the participants' constructions. Doing this provides the advantage of presenting a concise account of what has been found. It also makes the knowledge generated accessible to other teachers, policy makers and members of the research community who will come across such research reports. For me, my objective was to develop an understanding of inclusive classroom practice and present my findings in such a manner that they could be useful in influencing teachers' practices in Nigerian classrooms.

It was therefore pertinent that the knowledge generated from this research was presented in a rich but succinct form. The interpretation at this level of the data analysis was aimed at reconstructing the meaning of actions and practices. By doing this, I aimed at focusing on the significance of actions and reporting them in such a way that the knowledge generated could be understood and used by others in similar circumstances (Hammersley et al., 2000; Somekh, 2012; Thomas, 2011). At this stage of the process of analysis, the outcome was determined by focusing on the collective patterns of these teachers' practices.

5.6 Deciding the outcome - Stage 3

I began this third stage of the data analysis by reconstructing each case teacher's narrative based on an example from the classes that I had observed. At this point, I had gone through a process in which I had continuously compared the teachers across and within the schools. I had discerned patterns and trends regarding what the practice of each participating teacher comprised based on my observations and interview interactions with them. I returned to my transcripts and observation notes to search

through them again. In the end, I chose an observed class from each case teacher, which reflected their patterns of practice. This decision was also informed by those issues that were reflected in the data set and are part of the findings presented and discussed. This was reconstructed into a narrative of a lesson and accompanied by interview extracts that explained the various aspects of the classroom interactions. At this point I also revisited my research aims, research questions and the theoretical ideas that informed my study. Using these ideas and principles that underpin inclusive practice as discussed in chapter three, I began to interrogate each of the narratives developed as examples of the teachers' classroom practice.

What I did is similar to what Florian and Spratt (2013) did in their study. They used the theoretical principles of inclusive practice, which they linked to core teacher education courses, to interrogate the practice of their case teachers. The difference between what they did and how I approached my interrogation of these teachers' practice is that they developed a framework with possible examples of how each of the principles of practice can be manifested in practice. They also used these principles to code their data. However, in the context of my study, I used the framework for participation to first develop a context of practice and understand my data to its fullest extent before developing a narrative for the case teachers' practice. It was based on these narratives that I then referred back to the principles and ideas of inclusive practice in the literature. My intention in doing this was to closely examine the case teachers' inclusive classroom practice in order to identify whether the principles of inclusive classroom practice, as obtainable in the literature, were enacted or not in the varied nature of their practices.

I did not develop examples of how this might found in the data because firstly, I wanted to maintain an inductive edge despite my deductive approach to analysing the data. This was for the purpose of guarding against the acceptance of prior researchers' assumptions, projections and biases without critical reflections (Boyatzis, 1998). Secondly, the decision to proceed with my interpretations in this manner was not a predefined decision that I had made earlier on in the research process. This decision was made when I had finished the second stage of the data analysis. After exploring possible

options that could best present the data and emerging findings, I decided on this option as being the best way to communicate my research findings so that they effectively address the research questions raised. What I did was to go through the case teachers' accounts, interrogate their practice based on the principles and theoretical underpinnings of inclusive classroom practice. I presented and discussed these principles in chapter three. The outcome of this process is presented in chapter six.

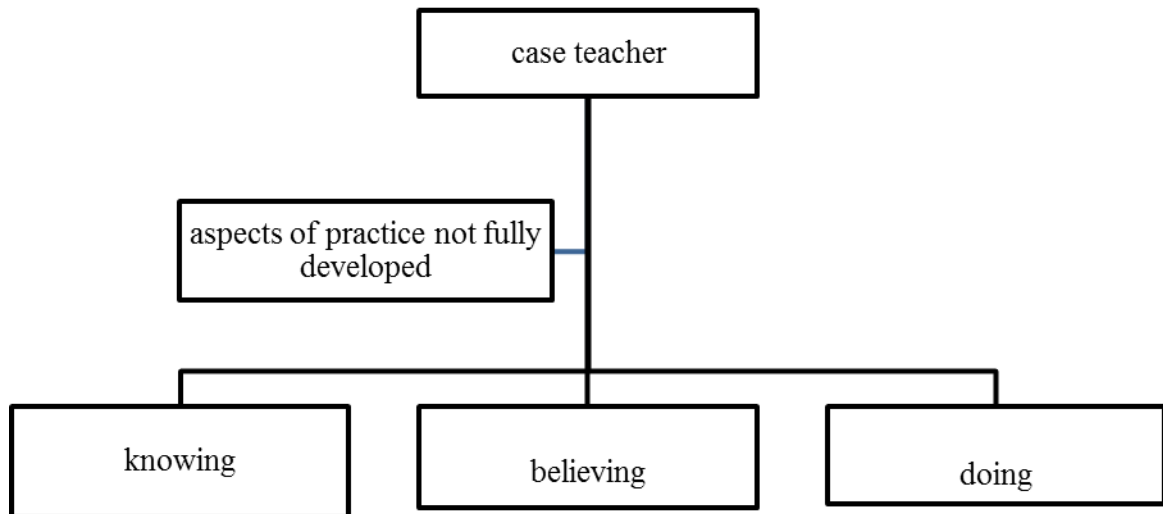
5.7 Findings structure

I have presented a significant portion of the findings in this thesis in reference to six vignettes. These vignettes are weaved into the text in chapters six and seven. I have woven and referred to these vignettes at different points especially when presenting outcomes from my interrogations of the case teachers' classroom practice both in chapter six and chapter seven. Supporting these vignettes are some other data extracts presented in other parts of these findings chapters.

The decisions that I made with regard to what to focus on and what not to focus on while constructing these vignettes were based on my interpretations of the case teachers' developing classroom practice. The decision to use vignettes with specific examples was one that I made after I had finished the second stage of the data analysis. At this stage, I reflected on how I was going to be able to provide a portrayal of classroom practice without characterizing the teachers as either inclusive or exclusive in their practice. These examples of practice were drawn from the entire data set on the basis of the trends and patterns that had already emerged from the process of data analysis.

The pattern and trends from the 12 case teachers were visualized through the use of flow charts. These flow charts are presented in section one of Appendix M. I have also provided pen -pictures of all case teachers in section two of Appendix M. The structure of these charts is depicted in the diagram below.

Figure 2: Structure of chart used to depict case teachers' practice



I consulted these diagrams alongside the trends and patterns tables, which contained more detailed information that reflects these trends and patterns across and within the case teachers' practices; the codes and extracts tables; the observation notes; and the interview transcripts, in a free flowing manner. Examples from all of the case teachers were constructed through this process. Even though these vignettes are examples drawn from specific case teachers, they are a reflection of what emerged from the data generated and should not be seen or interpreted as a characterization of specific teachers' practice. I interpreted the examples presented as portrayals of my research findings in the context of how they were embedded and in the sequences with which they were occurred within the larger networks, situations and relationships of the entire data set generated from all the research participants (Silverman, 2006)

The interpretations of events in this research were aimed at developing an understanding for the purposes of the research. I am not laying claim to have developed an absolute truth as my interpretations are in many ways contextually situated in the time, place,

culture and situation within which this research was carried out and I, as the researcher was actively engaged with the entire process (Bryant, 2002; K. Charmaz, 2014). I must add that as many as the examples are weaved in on the basis of my interpretation of the case teachers' practice I cannot claim that my interpretations are from a complete objective point of view (Charmaz, 2014; Guba, 1990). I am however, convinced that the examples that I have included in this thesis are those that provide a rich, valuable and appropriate portrayal of the findings for the purpose of this particular research. I had to be practical about providing examples that provide evidence that explains the main findings knowing that I was working within a word count limit (King, 2004).

In making my decision as to which of the examples were 'rich, valuable and appropriate' for this thesis, I looked at the overall pattern of practice alongside each individual case teacher's pattern of practice. To enhance this process, I referred to the layout developed as charts for each teacher. That not only gave me, at a glance, the pattern and trend of practice for that case teacher, but also allowed me to see the different elements present in the case teachers' practice. These elements and their reflected relationships formed the basis of my construction of each vignette. I have provided these layouts as charts on the diagrams in section one of Appendix M. I chose examples that reflect the complexity of daily classroom life in which the processes of inclusive and exclusive practice sometimes co-exist and are constantly or continuously being negotiated both by the case teachers and the students in their classrooms (Armstrong et al., 2011; Benjamin, Nind, Hall, Collins, & Sheehy, 2003; Booth et al., 2002).

These vignettes are aimed at illustrating that these themes that emerged are important to understanding teachers' practice. For each vignette, I have constructed an example of an observed classroom encounter with a case teacher. The six vignettes were constructed as part of the third stage of the data analysis. The use of rich and thick descriptions in reporting case studies is a useful process that can illuminate research findings (Merriam, 1998; Thomas, 2011). This distinguishing feature of case studies informed my decision to employ the use of vignettes. Following Simons (2009), these vignettes are used as portrayals that report examples of events in the case teachers' classrooms. I constructed

these examples in vignettes only for the purpose of providing a detailed account of some of the examples of how classroom activities happened while I observed them during the period of data generation. My decision to present these findings through the use of such portrayals in vignettes is to foreground interpretations within the context of practice (Stake, 2005; Stark & Torrance, 2005).

I am aware that in constructing these vignettes, I have made some conscious and selective decisions. I made these decisions on the basis of my interpretations of the case teachers' practices. My interpretations of the teachers' nature of practice informed my decision regarding which examples of practice to draw from, develop and present as part of this thesis. Knowing the possible implications of using a few examples to portray the entire data set, I engaged with a process of reflection after constructing the vignettes. This simple process involved the use of Burke's (1969) idea of analysing drama. Without delving deeply into how drama is analysed, I used the basic structure of having a comment that explains an aspect of these elements. The comment addressed the questions: What is the act in the vignette? What scene is being portrayed in the vignette? What is the agency being portrayed and what is the purpose of what is being portrayed? Who are the main actors in the vignette? This was a post vignette construction reflection that helped me question the purpose for which I had constructed the vignettes and why I had chosen to present these in this research report. I wanted to check whether they were really a portrayal of the main themes and outcomes of the data that has been generated and analysed. It was after this reflective exercise, that I became convinced that the findings that emerged are effectively portrayed through these six vignettes.

In this chapter I have detailed the process of data analysis and the outcome of each stage of the process. In the next two chapters, I present the findings that address the research questions raised in this study.

CHAPTER SIX

ENACTING THE PRINCIPLES OF INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM PRACTICE

6.1 Introduction

The findings that emerged from this research are presented and discussed in two chapters (Chapters six and seven). This chapter is divided into three sections. In these sections, I address the first sub-research question: *what type of practice are these teachers engaging with?* Each of these sections (6.2, 6.3 and 6.4) focuses on a principle of inclusive classroom practice. In each of these, I reflect on the outcome of my interrogation of teachers' practices on the basis of the three principles of inclusive classroom practice discussed in section 3.4.

6.2 Shift in focus from some children to all children

This principle holds that inclusive classroom practice is that in which attention is moved from a focus on only those who have been identified as having a disability to the learning of all children in the classroom community. This is on the basis that focusing on a disability identifies and marks the child identified as having a learning need because of a disability and as being different. This is then manifested in a way that the individual child or children concern are stigmatised. The challenge within this principle is to create learning opportunities for all children in the classroom community by extending what is normally available for most learners to all, disability notwithstanding (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011).

My analysis of data from the case teachers' practice revealed that five case teachers (Mr. Othniel, Mr. Absalom, Miss Hulda, Miss Nehemiah and Mr. Weng) in some instances reflected their development and application of this principle in the manner in which they

managed their classroom teaching and learning activities. They enacted this principle in how they provided activities that created an opportunity and space for all children in the classroom to contribute to, participate in and engage with learning activities. I interpreted class activities in which all students were allowed to contribute, discuss and engage meaningfully as those which provided an opportunity for all to learn. An example of how this principle was reflected in a classroom is presented in *vignette 1* where a classroom teaching and learning activity is carried out by Mr. Othniel.

Vignette 1: Mr. Othniel

Mr. Othniel is the creative arts teacher who teaches year 9 (i.e. JSS3) students. In this observed class, Mr. Othniel wanted his students to interact and learn from each other in such a manner that all the students in the class are able to benefit from the learning activity. Mr. Othniel explained that although organising group activities might be time consuming for him he wanted the students to be able to use each other as a resource in learning and supporting each other's learning. This demonstrated a focus on both the social process as well as the process of knowledge creation between members of the classroom community as they participate in classroom activities.

"It helps you know. Sometimes when they exchange ideas, they tend to understand faster than when the teacher is teaching them" Mr. Othniel explained.

The context in which this class was observed was a lesson on 'the historic development of creative arts (with a focus on Prehistoric arts)'. Students in the class were grouped into groups of five, with one group comprising six members (the class size being 26). Students were allowed to decide what group they were going to be part of. The only criterion was to be in a group where there would be at least one person with the recommended text. The 26th student did not immediately join a group. The teacher encouraged her to find a group. He did not in any way force her into joining any group nor did he make a group accept her by forcing her into a group. She eventually negotiated with a group and joined them.

Eventually, the groups varied with a mixture of boys and girls and the two students with a visual impairment in that class also joined two different groups. In doing this it was observed that the basis of grouping for the students was to find where they could share the text with other students and not on the basis of gender, or a certain criteria of ability, or students with visual impairments been made to be part of a specific group. Mr. Othniel paid

more attention to what is to be learnt and how it was going to be learnt. In explaining why he decided to use group activities his response was “...so that they can interact amongst themselves...”

Prior to commencing the group work, Mr. Othniel went round to each group and provided them with instructions on what he expects of them as a group. Each group was asked to read a section of the text. They were expected to choose a representative who would read the text to all the group members and another representative who would make notes on key points that the group wants to take note of. Mr. Othniel emphasised that other group members should also take down some notes while the group work proceeded to enhance their ability to contribute to the follow up question and answer session that followed the group work. While observing, Mr. Othniel made himself available to each group to address specific issues raised by the group. He did not restrict his attention to specific groups. At other times, when all the groups were settled into what they were doing, he paid attention to preparing the questions and answers for the next section of the class activity, allowing the students to discuss and interact between themselves.

In doing this Mr. Othniel is able to provide appropriate support for all the students in all groups. Besides that, Mr. Othniel also emphasised the need for the group to work collaboratively as a group learning together but he also encouraged the students to support each other in being considerate to the needs of all members of their groups. This was to encourage the peers in the groups to respond in positive ways to the needs of all members of the group as the activity proceeded.

Likewise, Mr. Othniel allowed the groups to decide who did what and at the same time ensured that the group activity was not just relegated to a few representatives but that all members of the group were active in the group activity. “Yes, I always do that. I always do that. When they are to write, I want to see them do it...I want them to write... if you leave them, they will just doze off... I wanted them to concentrate on a particular aspect so they will be able to bring out the best in them. I did not want to generalise it, because it will take longer if somebody is reading the whole thing to them. You know it will take longer. Because ehh, if you noticed too, I allotted different aspects, topics to each group and I wanted them in particular to be active in that”, he explained.

Group work managed by the students was the first section of the class activity. The second half of the class was comprised of a question and answer session. Students were expected to remain in their groups during the class. Questions were directed to the groups based on the sections of the text they were expected to have read. In the initial stage of the group work Mr. Othniel

explained that he will choose who responds to the question from a group on the assumption that they would have all discussed it during the group work. After the first set of questions to each group, he noticed that they were not relaxed. He then changed the instruction and allowed each group to consult each other before a representative from the group was allowed to respond to the teacher's question. This time, they should decide on who responds to the question. This reflects the flexibility with which Mr. Othniel wanted in the class so as to create a welcoming and safe class for all and shows how he uses the information from how students were responding to inform how he goes about the learning activity. He was also using the information he gained from their response as a formative assessment to direct the rest of the classroom activities. Forcing a student to respond on behalf of the group meant that some of the students were more nervous about what they said. This process allowed the groups to interact and decide what their response was going to be and who was to represent the group. In doing this Mr. Othniel was demonstrating his trust in the students' ability to decide and manage who represents them and to make decisions for the benefit of all the group members.

During the course of the question and answer section of the class activity, I also observed that other members of the group, including those with disabilities came in at various points to support their representative when they provided their responses on behalf of the group. Mr. Othniel allowed them to support responses where they thought it was necessary. This led the activity to be more of an interaction and that in which they supported each other towards the progress of the group as a whole (in terms of what they achieved) as against just getting the right response to earn the reward being given by the teacher for the right response. The rewards given to groups were sometimes negotiated by the whole class (including those from other groups). Afterwards, the teacher awarded bonus rewards for those who made an attempt even if they did not get the response completely right. By doing so he acknowledges their progress in learning from what they were assigned to do. Moreover, all members of the class were able to enjoy various levels of progress and achievement during the course of the lesson and no group was left feeling defeated or not achieving in any way at all.

For Mr. Othniel, he explained during his interview that he views children with disabilities in his class the same as every other child and they should be attended to as such except in very specific situations. If there is a need to provide extra instructions outside the class he only does this when the need arises for the students with disabilities. He only does this during break times. Otherwise he teaches them all. He had a double lesson with a break in between to implement this. I did not observe this happen with Mr. Othniel or any of the case teachers at Awolowo School during the period of data

generation.

From the example presented in *Vignette 1*, it is evident that Mr. Othniel focused on what he wanted his students to learn. He planned and managed this classroom activity on the basis of how he wanted them to learn and what he wanted them to learn. Even though it appeared that he had planned how he wanted it to be done, he remained flexible and allowed the students to influence, manage and direct how the activities were actually implemented as the class progressed. He supported their decisions and provided further directions as the need for such became necessary through the class activity. This principle of shifting the focus on all children by extending what is ordinarily available for most to all is reflected in the manner this particular class was structured. This observed class reflects the nature of inculcating the social-cultural understanding of learning and participation that inclusive practice draws from.

On the contrary, there was an example of the use of a similar teaching strategy by another case teacher which did not appear to be particularly effective in engaging all the students in the classroom.

Vignette 2: Mr. Jetur

Mr. Jetur is the only other case teacher that used group work in one of his classes that I observed. Mr. Jetur teaches year 9 (i.e. JSS3) students English at Gowon High School. In his interview he explained how interactions amongst and between students is key to the learning experience that students have in school. The observed English class was based on a drama text that students were expected to read and comprehend. The drama text was titled “Reality: Health is wealth”. The class was comprised of 56 students and they were grouped into four groups. Each group included about ten to fifteen members. Grouping was based on the already existing seating arrangements in the class. This was decided by the students themselves. Each row in the class had a mixture of boys and girls and they all became a group. The class had two students with visual impairments and a student with a physical impairment. These students with disabilities were not all together in a single group. They sat across from each other in three different rows, thus they were all in different groups with their peers. There was no particular criterion, such as ability grouping or disability that was used in grouping students for this particular class activity.

Prior to this class (some days earlier) Mr. Jetur had pre-informed the class about the intended class activity. Students in each group were expected to read specific sections of the drama text as assigned by the teacher. They were to read as individuals within the group. Each group was assigned two chapters to read. The class had been pre-informed that it would be comprised of a question and answer session in which Mr. Jetur would ask questions directed to groups based on the chapters of the book they have read. The same text was available to all students and chapters were assigned across the groups covering the whole text. Students were expected to have read and comprehended the text ready to respond to the questions Mr. Jetur was going to ask them. This reflects how Mr. Jetur opened up the learning activity so that all the students in the class are able to participate and contribute.

While observing the class, Mr. Jetur instructed all the groups to quickly discuss their response and then one person could respond on behalf of the group. He also urged the group to move closer to each other for easy consultation. The students responded by squeezing in and sitting closer and around each other. Even though students were supposed to work together as a group, their contribution was supposed to be based on the text they had read as individuals which is then expected to enhance their ability to contribute to the group. Mr. Jetur explained what he intended to achieve in using group activities as his teaching strategy.

“You see like in the group work, the one you saw us doing, you make it open so that every one of them can participate. Like you met Biodun (i.e. one of the students with a visual impairment) participating and the rest but like ehh this one. This particular one that we are going to do now, the argumentative essay, the only way you think they can participate is that you think they will write this essay and then, they will first of all discuss it. And in the course of their discussion there will be this interaction that will make them be carried along” Mr. Jetur

Here Mr. Jetur focuses on what is expected to be learnt and how learning can be structured for everyone to be part of it and not who is learning what and who is not learning what. This was his expectation. During the course of the observed class, students responded and contributed. However, sometimes it did appear that the same representative responded over and over again and some of the other group members were quiet. They appeared to be observers and listened to what their peers in the group were discussing. They did not appear to be contributing to the group interactions. I also observed that for the students with disabilities, the visually impaired students appeared more involved in what was going on compared to the students with the physical impairment who like some other observed students were also the quiet students in her group.

While the question and answer session proceeded, Mr. Jetur also observed and commented on the students' responses by asking *"was it only one person in the group that read the text?"* He was complaining about having only a few representatives responding over and over again from one group. However, he did not dwell much on this concern as he quickly proceeded with the class. This made more students from the group attempt to respond subsequently. Yet, not everyone was fully engaged with the activity taking place. This observation was raised during the interview with Mr. Jetur and he explained, *"So sometimes, situation matters. In a situation where you have 40 questions for 40 minutes, you have to hurry"*. Time restraints as highlighted by Mr. Jetur limited his ability to ascertain that all the students were actively participating in their respective groups or to explore what could have led to the low response and engagement from all group members. Here Mr. Jetur focused on what the barrier to effective learning is but he did not see this barrier as a challenge that could be negotiated. More importantly, Mr. Jetur explained that individual students also have a role to play in their learning experience and in their ability to effectively participate in classroom activities.

"Yes, I think it is due to their personality type. Some of them are introverts. Like Biodun is an extrovert. Even the other time when we had drama, acting, he was the one that was acting, that played the role of Madam Bella, another drama text we had. In a group where we had female students, he volunteered to act and he dressed as a female student. He is more willing than most of them, the others" he explained.

In the above quote, Mr. Jetur attributes students' participation as being based on their willingness to be part of the class activity. By implication, he expects the students to take the initiative and to be part of what is going on without much facilitation from the teacher. He further buttresses his point in the interview extract below:

"So I hope that, you know, they are not living on their own island, they interact with these ones, so some of the things we try to explain to them, by the time they meet their fellow students and they are exchanging ideas, they can even understand it better ...and another thing is that some of them, they relate very well. And from my own personal experience those of them that relate very well, you know as we were coming out of the class, you saw how Biodun came after me and he was so inquisitive to ask what is this and this... So I feel that on their own part too, they always ought to be advised to have closer relationships with their respective teachers. And then in that area, you will now be able to find out what exactly you think the problem is."

Based on the above extract from Mr. Jetur's interview, students are expected to

take the lead in being responsible for their learning experiences. They are to take responsibility for what kind of experience they have. It was also observed that at the end of the class, some students were murmuring and complaining about not reading the text and thus were unable to respond as expected. However, the teacher did not respond to them nor did he pay attention to their complaints. The group scores were collated and the class ended.

Two main points can be drawn from the use of group work as a teaching strategy by Mr. Jetur. First is in how he responds to students' responses and engagement in the class activity and secondly, Mr. Jetur's understanding of the students' role and his role in the nature of the learning experiences students have in the classroom. Mr. Jetur did not respond to his observation of the lack of proper engagement by most members of the different groups. He only stopped to challenge without exploring what could have led to such poor engagements. Here there could have been a barrier that accounted for the reluctance from the students. However, Mr. Jetur was more focused on the time constraints and what needed to be done within the time, thereby missing out on what could have enhanced the participation of the class members.

This can be explained in terms of his understanding that students ought to or are expected to take the lead role in enhancing their learning experiences. In discussing effective classroom teaching in Chapter three, I discussed how both teachers and students are equal partners in the learning experiences in classrooms. Moreover, teachers take the role of facilitators whose responsibility it is to enhance the students' ability to gain the most from the learning activities. They do this through the process that creates the space for participation, enabling the student to make the transition from being the novice to a more active and full participant in the learning process (Chaiklin, 2003; Lave, 1996; Rogoff, 1994, 1999).

The role of the teacher here is to support the student towards making the most of their time and experience in the classroom while they learn (Daniels, 2009; Vygotsky, 1978). This is contrary to Mr. Jetur's assumption of learning being dependent on students' willingness, level of seriousness or personality and that they are solely responsible or

have the main responsibility in enhancing their learning experiences. Seven other case teachers (Mr. David, Miss Hulda, Mr. Lotan, Mr. Noah, Mrs. Adam, Miss Miriam and Mr. Absalom) and other school staff interviewed also expressed the same understanding of the role of students in the learning experiences that they have. This was also closely related to their beliefs about students' ability which I will be discussing in section 6.3 below. In stating this understanding though, case teachers did identify and acknowledge the importance of students learning from their peers, just as Mr. Jetur has done. Learning from peers is an important aspect of learning in inclusive classrooms. However, it becomes more effective when this process is facilitated effectively by an adult who is able to direct the process more efficiently and motivates the students to become more involved, as well as to go beyond the levels they are at currently (Claxton, 2007; Kershner, 2009; Vygotsky, 1978; Watkins et al., 2002).

Comparing Mr. Othniel's observed class (*vignette 1*) to Mr. Jetur's (*vignette 2*), a different scenario emerges even though both teachers were using a similar teaching strategy. Their enactment of the principle in which there is a shift in focus from some to everybody (i.e. extending what is normally available to all) manifests itself in different ways, thus leading to different outcomes. For Mr. Othniel, based on the observed students' response in the class, it can be said that the students participated and were part of the class learning activity. For Mr. Jetur, some of the students participated while others did not appear to be active in the group consultations as the class progressed.

It is easy to try to attribute the differences in this outcome to factors such as the size of the class and the time available for task. Class size alone does not account for differences in learning experiences amongst students. The difference it makes is how much time the teacher has to provide personal instruction and manage the class (Blatchford, 2003, 2009). While a larger class means an increase in the diversity of students' learning needs expected to be met by the teacher (UNESCO, 2014), the more important teacher factor that influences students' learning experience is the teachers' understanding of learning, what it is; how it can be achieved and how they perceive their

roles in enhancing this process (Alexander, 2001, 2004; Frost & Little, 2014; Rogoff, 1994; Westbrook et al., 2013).

Time constraints which is part of the lack of flexibility in the school structure and systems is a barrier to classroom learning that has also been identified by different studies (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007; Dyson & Millward, 2000; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Hart et al., 2004). While these barriers exist, teachers' focus should remain on how they can work within the system to ensure that students' learning experiences are facilitated and enhanced. Inclusive practice looks beyond the problem and tries to find ways in which problems can be negotiated and addressed within the limits of the existing structures and systems (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007; Dyson & Millward, 2000; Hart, 2012).

Fundamental to the outcome of classroom practice are the ideas and understanding that inform practice, especially with regards to how learning can be enhanced. The examples from the vignettes 1 and 2 reflect how teachers' application of the same strategy can lead to different outcomes. These can also be linked to their underlying beliefs and assumptions about learning and the roles that both they as teachers and their students are expected to take in the teaching and learning process. I have discussed how this played out in Mr. Jetur's class. For other case teachers whose practice did not meet this principle, I will be discussing the nature of the practice that they are developing in Chapter seven where I provide examples of how teachers' beliefs, knowledge and action interrelate. Through these examples, there is a reflection of how what teachers see as an outcome of their practice influences what they do (Westbrook et al., 2013), as well as how teachers' understanding of their roles shapes the interactions and learning opportunities available for learners in a classroom (Rix et al., 2006).

Regardless of Mr. Jetur's assumption about students taking the responsibility and leading their own learning experiences, the manner with which he managed the classroom allowed him to be more active and in control of how the class progressed regardless of students' response in the learning activity. Unlike Mr. Othniel, whose rules

became more flexible after he observed the students' initial response to his questions, Mr. Jetur continued with his initial rule of having a representative responding from the group. Mr. Othniel's flexibility meant that more of the group members were able to step in and support the response provided by their representative. This made the learning process in Mr. Othniel's class more interactive which reflected more of a community of learners as compared to the scenario in Mr. Jetur's class. The idea of having a community of learners was less reflected in Mr. Jetur's class because he assumed that students were going to take the initiative and responsibility for their learning while he directs what they have done as individuals, rather than having them all in the community together in which he, as the more experienced adult facilitates the learning process (Rogoff, 1999). This difference in the nature of practice is similar to the findings reported by Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011). In their study, they also found that some of the teachers that participated in their study sometimes implemented practices that did not shift the focus of learning on all students. This is also a reflection of part of the findings reported by Nind et al. (2004), where they found that although teachers used the same teaching strategies, their manifestation in classroom activities varied.

This finding has further drawn attention to the need to understand more closely why and how teachers implement their classrooms practices instead of a focus on just identifying strategies that appear to have a tendency to be more inclusive than others (Artiles et al., 2007; Black-Hawkins, 2014).

6.3 Rejecting the notion of fixed ability

In rejecting the notion of fixed ability, teachers do not hold the notion that some children are unable to progress. This principle encourages teachers to avoid the use of information or feedback from learning as a determinant that is used to indicate the learning that is possible. This principle also includes the rejection of the notion that the presence of some students who have been labelled as unable to progress will hold back the progress of others (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Hart et al., 2004; Hart et al.,

2007). I interpreted case teachers' reflections on what was possible for their students to achieve as the notions they have of their students' abilities. All case teachers believed in their students' ability to make progress and achieve in their learning. Five case teachers' (Mrs. Adam, Mr. Weng, Mr. Jetur, Mr. Lotan and Mr. Seba) beliefs were outcomes of their current experience in teaching in these classrooms where there is a child with a disability. These examples are reflected in the interview extracts below:

Actually, at the beginning, I found it strange, because when I started, I came to teach in place of someone, I had a blind student there, actually the first thing after teaching, when the person [i.e. the child with a disability] writes it will be better than even some of them that were normal...how I was thinking it wasn't like that because the person [i.e. the child with a disability] is only listening, it was even food and nutrition, cooking. The person [i.e. the child with a disability] will listen, at the end of the day when you give them CE, the normal person [i.e. the child without a disability] will score less than 70 and the person [i.e. the child with a disability] will score up to 80 or 80 something, the normal thing. Mr. Weng

We know that ehh, that somebody is having, a visual impairment does not make the person a dullard. But if you know how it used to be, once you have a disability people just push you aside. But some of them if you discuss with them, you will know that ah, there is something in this person's upstairs. But because of the opportunity...I am looking forward to the day that he will graduate in this school...I am looking forward to that day. I am really looking forward to that day, and I will see my fulfilment on that day too, when they came to JSS1 I was one of the people that introduced them to mathematics. (Mr. Lotan)

In the quotes above, Mr. Lotan discuss how he believes his student is able to make progress and how his contribution to that process is an achievement to him. Noticeably, in the case teachers' beliefs, as reflected in the above interview extract, was their reference to students' previous academic achievements which they refer to as an indication of the learning that is possible. There was an exception with one case teacher Mrs. Adam who focused on the progress that two of her students with learning difficulties have made from the point when they came into the school.

"He is trying, at least when he was in primary, JSS1 he was not like this. He is improving"... They are okay, like these ones now they are improving, they are picking up. They were not like this when they came. If there is no improvement, do you think their parents will be wasting their money bringing them to school? Mrs. Adam

Here Mrs. Adam's statement reflects how current progress is seen as an indication of future possibility and improvement in learning. It is also on this basis that the school has also allowed the students to progress alongside their peers.

It is important to add that for these teachers, their beliefs did not come naturally. They are commenting after having taught these children over a period of time. This understanding is particularly important especially in a context where it is those children with sensory impairments that are often the most marginalised. Previous studies in a similar context to Nigeria such as those reported by Gyimah, Sugden, and Pearson (2009) in Ghana and Mukhopadhyay et al. (2012) in Botswana found that teachers often felt less able to enable a child with a visual or hearing impairment to learn and make progress alongside their peers. For these case teachers, they do acknowledge the previous progress made and even though this progress might not be what others might expect, they have remained positive that further progress can still be made. The child is capable of progressing beyond whatever level they are currently at now. The above perceptions of the learning abilities of children with disabilities in their classrooms did not come naturally for these teachers. For these case teachers, it was a result of a process through which their perception has changed over time.

6.3.1 The presence of children with disabilities holding back the progress of others

I interpreted the case teachers' reflection on the implication of having a child with a disability in their classroom as their perception of the notion of some students holding back the progress of others. None of the case teachers held the notion that the presence of some holds back the progress of the class. Eleven case teachers did not think the presence of a child with a disability holds back the others. They associated the presence of the child as part of their work and a responsibility they have to take on. An example of this understanding is reflected in the interview extract below:

Are you sure? Having that feeling is off their limits [i.e. the teachers' limits]. How can a teacher have that feeling? To teach somebody who is 'deficient'. I think it is wrong of them to think like that. Even me alone, because the first day I met them in class, it was not an easy task for me, but gradually, gradually. Mr. Seba

Mr. Seba also states how he thinks it is not right for a teacher to feel that having a child with a disability is an additional responsibility or extra responsibility that slows down their work. For these case teachers they also saw their work as that of having a sense of responsibility or ‘*a calling*’. I will be further discussing teachers’ beliefs about their roles in Chapter seven.

Another perspective to this understanding was expressed by one other case teacher, Mr. Absalom. Mr. Absalom does not believe that the presence of a child with a disability is an added task to what he has to do in the classroom. Throughout his interview, Mr. Absalom reflected on how he sees all children in the classroom as having different learning needs and that no need is a cause to time wastage or delays over the other. His perception as reflected in the extract below is that diversity in learning needs exists and is part of everyday classroom life. Paying attention to all forms of diversity makes no difference in particular in the entire teaching and learning experience.

‘The fact is that the time wasted, as I have discovered from those without a visual impairment is much more than ehhe, so for that I don’t even think of them wasting time. Because those without a visual impairment, when you are teaching them, they will turn, just turn to somebody like this. So when you turn to somebody you are not paying attention to me again, you are even distracting that one that you turned to. So the two of them, you have made me lose the two of you in the class because I have to drop whatever I am saying and say ehhe Kofo pay attention and don’t disturb ehhe. By the time I have done that at least five seconds, so if five seconds have gone ten times in a period, that means 50 seconds, so in a week almost 1 minute, so in a week like that is 5 minutes, in a term, we know how many periods that could have gone in a term, a period is sufficient to do something important’. (Mr. Absalom)

As stated earlier, behavioural problems or less visible disabilities are often not identified or called a disability in the Nigerian context. Here Mr. Absalom is saying that even when the learning problem is of less concern than the visible learning need that is seen as a problem, this all requires the attention of the teacher as they are all learning needs. This underpinning assumption held by Mr. Absalom was also reflected in how he managed his classroom interactions. The only exception to this understanding from case teachers was with Miss Miriam who saw the presence of a child with a disability as that

which slowed down her teaching practice. I will be elaborating more on these beliefs and how they are enacted in practice later on in Chapter seven of this thesis. Although there was a general sense of acknowledgment of the presence of a child with a disability not being about holding back the learning of others, there was an expression of opinion that the presence of a child with a disability is extra work that adds to the teachers' responsibilities. Mr. Lotan's example here indicates such:

I will only tell you that one it is extra work because you must talk everything you have written on the board. That is the reason why it is extra work...oh now sure now, sure, sure, sure, when you do not have them in your class you are lucky. But when you have them in your class, you must go the extra mile. Because you are doing more than your other colleagues are doing and nobody is recognising it. Nobody is seeing it. (Mr. Lotan)

Despite Mr. Lotan's conviction about the difference he is making and the ability of his students to progress until the completion of their education (as reflected in an earlier quote), he still expresses the opinion that it is extra work to have a child with a disability in his class and if given the option, he would prefer to avoid having to teach them. This opinion was expressed by three other case teachers (Mrs. Nehemiah, Miss Miriam and Mr. Weng). The feeling of inclusive practice being a difficult task and hard work for teachers has also been discussed elsewhere (Allan, 2008). However, the feeling that putting in extra effort might sometimes go unrecognised or appear futile, Allan (2008) explains is an indication of the continuous struggle to address barriers to learning that can sustain inclusive practices. A similar feeling of having an extra work load in being inclusive has also been reported by Mukhopadhyay et al. (2012) in their study of teachers' practices. Moreover, research into how conflicting demands in the school context influence teachers' work has also indicated how these factors add to teachers' feelings about the burden to be inclusive in their practice (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007; Dyson & Millward, 2000; Dyson, Millward, & Gallannaugh, 2003).

One of the ways in which this feeling can be alleviated is through the school culture or environment that supports teachers and gives them a sense of belonging in their individual efforts (Carrington, 1999). However, in my interactions with the

administrative staff in the context of all case teachers' schools, there was no evidence of established support systems available for the teachers. The schools' administration in this study assumed that their teachers were going to find ways of developing their practice by themselves. This did not particularly turn out as the school authorities assumed because case teachers sometimes did feel unappreciated in their efforts. This is a point reflected in Mr. Lotan's comments above.

In other instances case teachers' belief in students' ability to progress in their learning was linked to the assumption about students having a responsibility to enhance their learning experiences. This was sometimes reflected in the assumption that in regular classrooms, students' achievement in any activity is expected to vary regardless of teachers' efforts. Miss Hulda for instance, in her interview discussed her willingness to reflect and change her teaching approach and strategy when she realises that students are not learning or making progress in her class activity. This indicates how she reflected on what she was doing in order to respond to the learning needs of her students. She sometimes uses the feedback from students' responses as a source of information to inform her next actions in class.

However, Miss Hulda also holds the understanding that in a regular classroom students will progress at different levels. She explains this means that some students will have to fail and being a teacher, there was nothing she could do to change that.

Miss Hulda: ... if you are teaching and you realise that students are not getting you or when you assess them and see that they are poor, maybe you write first [i.e. write an assessment] and you find out that they are not able to pass, maybe you change your method so that they will understand. Because your essence is not for them to fail, the essence is for them to pass. Once the majority pass, it means your aim has been achieved. Your objective has been achieved.

Me (researcher): Yes, but then what happens to the other ones? The minority? Those ones that do not pass?

Miss Hulda: Whether you like it or not as a teacher whether in a higher institution, whether in a secondary school, whether in a primary sector. You will find out that it is not all that will pass...

In the above interview extract, Miss Hulda explains how she ensures that ‘most’ of her students show evidence that they have learnt and that this learning is reflected in their achievement determined through a process of assessment. Through this assessment, she focuses on the progress of ‘most’ learners. In doing this she believes that her duty and role as a teacher has been fulfilled. The problem with this nature of thinking informing practice is that even though teachers might use the information they have to inform their teaching, children in classrooms are categorised into groups on the basis of most who make the expected progress and some who make progress, but not as expected.

It is a kind of thinking that places children at both ends of achievement in a manner referred to as bell curve thinking (Hart et al., 2004) in which there is the risk of some children being regarded as underachievers and not worth the exploration or follow up that can determine what is limiting their effective progress or what can enhance their progress beyond their current levels of progress (Boaler et al., 2000; Hart, 2012; Hart et al., 2007). Placing children in such categories in most instances means that some children continue to remain at the fringes of classroom learning and might not effectively be motivated to develop their capacities and potential to the fullest extent (Claxton, 2007; Singal, 2008; Watkins et al., 2002).

In the instance of Miss Hulda, this belief is that once the majority are able to make progress this can limit the extent to which she is able to reflect and develop a strategy that meets the needs of all the learners or extend opportunities for learning for all in the classroom community. She has categories for students in her class on the basis of what she thinks their abilities are and she works within this premise regardless of her use of feedback to inform her teaching and learning activities as was observed in her practice. The risk in this underpinning understanding is that the teacher can easily slip into believing that students have fixed abilities and limits to how much progress they can make. The problem will then be that if particular students continue to progress at a certain level, the barriers they might be encountering in learning will not be effectively explored and addressed.

A different way of thinking that can inform teachers' developing practice was present with the case teacher Mr. Absalom. In Mr. Absalom's interview, he reflects on how he tries to understand the outcome of his students' assessment, especially for those with disabilities. His response to the question on the progress of the students with disabilities in his classroom was:

"Under what I expected and ehh. They have started coming to me to tell me some of the problems they have and ... I am thinking, see me I am just thinking about how to help them out." Mr. Absalom

Here Mr. Absalom reflects an expectation for his students to make progress at a certain level. However, when this expected progress is not reflected, his response was to open up an opportunity for dialogue with the students to understand the problem and to try to find ways ahead towards ensuring further progress beyond their current levels of progress. This is a different kind of thinking to that of Miss Hulda. I discussed how teachers can make their practices effective for the development and learning of all children through the application of a reflective response to teaching in Chapter three. Mr. Absalom here appears to have positioned his mind-set towards that sort of reflective response to teaching and learning discussed by Hart (2000); Hart (2012) in her thinking through teaching model that enhances the participation of all children in classrooms.

In another dimension to understanding the different levels of progress made by students, case teachers remained flexible in interpreting what progress meant for each child. An instance is in Mrs. Adam's earlier reflection *"They are okay, like these ones now they are improving, they are picking up. They were not like this when they came"*. Here Mrs. Adam remains focused on the progress that her students with learning disabilities have made since being admitted and provided with an opportunity. She is not focusing on what they have not been able to achieve. This sort of varied interpretation of what progress is for each student was also stated by other case teachers.

This degree of flexibility alongside exploring how best a student or students can make progress beyond their current level are all important aspects of developing inclusive practice. The focus here for teachers is to be able to maintain a balance between

appreciating everyday progress and varied levels of progress in learning while still opening up opportunities for further and possible progress in future through their practices. It is about the use of differentiation in levels of progress or outcomes of learning encounters in flexible and imaginative ways to support teaching and learning as against categorising students in groups based on the perception of what their ability should be (Nind, 2005).

6.3.2 *Students' role in learning progress*

Notably in case teachers' accounts of their inclusive practice was also the assumption that the students' progress, especially if the student has a disability, is dependent on the students' ability to make themselves more involved in their learning experiences. This assumption is reflected in the following examples from case teachers' interviews.

"...those of them who are very hardworking, they are making it...She carried herself along and she is making it. Yes. She is very active. Even pertaining assessment, you will see that her assessment is even, even ahhh twice that of other students that are even sighted. So those of them that are hardworking, I remember one, I cannot even remember her name. But she passed out two or three years ago. She is also very active."
Miss Hulda

"Gang would have even been better than what he is doing if he was serious. I was not told, Gang solved quadratic equations in his head." Mr. Lotan

"Those that are willing to learn, they will always get people there to put them through".

Mrs. Adam

This assumption also relates to the point I made earlier about students' willingness to learn. However, in this context the assumption here is that if the student puts in as much effort as possible, is hardworking enough and active then their learning experience is enhanced. This line of thinking has its advantage in the sense that it allows teachers to assume competence in the initial instance. This suggests that the competence of students is not in doubt until it is in doubt. Therefore, with the absence of any evidence to the contrary, competence or ability can be presumed (Jenkins, 1998). In this instance, capacities, potentials and adequacies are understood as socially constructed and ascribed to an individual (Jenkins, 1998) on the basis of the individual's ability to conform to

certain characteristics of what is seen as necessary for personhood in a particular context (Ingstad, 2001). While this has a positive effect to start with, it also has the negative effect of hindering the provision of necessary support for students who encounter barriers in their learning. There is often a lack of identification about what might be the problem or the barrier to the child's effective participation is then left unattended on the assumption that the child has the ability to resolve the issue. An instance is seen in Miss Miriam's response to the barrier to participation that one of her students with a visual impairment had in class.

"...Like I had a problem with Hudung, that was last term. Hudung's typewriter was not typing well, you turn the paper in a different direction and you don't understand what she is typing. Then I had a problem with her in her CA. I really, really shouted at her that time. I said I don't even know how to set a typewriter. She knows where to get all these things done and she is just waiting for who? I don't know ..." Miss Miriam

From the above example, the case teacher's attention is focused on the child with a disability and what she is expected to do without realising that the actual barrier is in the equipment and that the child can be supported to get the problem sorted out. It also draws attention to the idea that the problem of learning is with the child and not with all the other things that could be interrelating with who the child is and their peculiar learning need within that particular learning environment, learning preferences and learning styles to become a barrier to the child's learning experience (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Thomas & Loxley, 2007). This leads to the third principle of inclusive classroom practice in which barriers to learning are seen as a professional challenge to be addressed which I discuss in section 6.4 below.

6.4 Difficulties in learning as a professional challenge (finding new ways of working with others)

This third principle of inclusive practice was the least evident in the developing practices of all participating teachers. The basis of this principle is that difficulties or problems in learning are seen as a professional challenge for the teacher. It is also a challenge that

leads to finding new ways of working with other professionals available within and beyond the school in resolving those problems encountered in learning endeavours (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011). Finding new ways of working to enhance the learning experiences of students was one of the least developed amongst case teachers. The only exception was with Mr. Absalom which I have already illustrated in section 6.3 above. The other case teachers responded in a similar way to Miss Miriam, as reflected in the example in section 6.3 above.

On the aspect of finding new ways of working with other professionals, this too was a problem in all school contexts where the case teachers were situated. Two of the school contexts (i.e. Gowon High School and Awolowo School) have resource persons who have training in special needs education. A resource person in these contexts is a teacher whose responsibility it is to manage the resource room and provide the necessary support to students with disabilities when the need arises. At Gowon High School the resource person is also a teacher who teaches a different subject, but also has this responsibility as a side responsibility. At Awolowo School the resource person has other extra-curricular responsibilities towards all the students, but she is primarily expected to support the students with disabilities in their learning endeavours. Azikiwe School on the other hand have a support centre within the same premises. This support centre is private and is managed independently from the schools. It provides learning materials for students with a visual impairment. It is also important to draw attention to the fact that in all the case teachers' classrooms, there were students with a visual impairment. This is a reflection of the statistics stated in section 2.2 of this thesis where physical disabilities such as visual impairment are the most prevalent and most often identified in countries such as Nigeria. I have also explained how sensory disabilities such as visual impairment are those easily included in the inclusion agenda because of their obvious nature. This explains why all the examples in this thesis have children with visual impairments. Thus there could have been other students with other types of disabilities in the classrooms observed.

Students with visual impairment at Azikiwe School and the school authority sometimes work directly with the centre to get the necessary support when there is need for it or when the schools pay for such services. The support centre mainly focuses on providing learning materials and training for teachers. The responsibilities of the resource person (s) at Azikiwe School are similar to those at Gowon High School.

In the course of my data analysis, it became apparent that although these schools had a resource person whose responsibility is to support the teachers (especially with the case teachers at Gowon High School and Awolowo School), there was often a misunderstanding about who takes responsibility for addressing the learning barriers experienced by students with disabilities. Most often the role of the resource person was mainly seen as that of providing support to learning outside and beyond the classroom context. This understanding in my opinion has an advantage in how it allowed the student to be in the class with all the other children without been marked out as a student who needs the extra support of a resource person to be able to learn in the regular class alongside their peers. It also provides the advantage that children with disabilities are allowed to remain in the classroom with their peers throughout classroom learning activities. In this instance their membership of the classroom community is not undermined in anyway (Florian, 2010; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011).

This system of support differs from that which Giangreco and Broer (2005) identified as what was mostly practiced in American schools. In their study Giangreco and Broer (2005) found that students with disabilities in regular schools and classrooms received a substantial amount of their teaching instructions from support staff instead of receiving them directly from their regular classroom teacher. The consequence of this they state is that support staff members do not work as a team but provide self-directed instruction to students with disabilities. That is they work on their own without collaborating with the teacher, thereby varying the learning experience of the child with the disability. This practice raises the question of whether children with disabilities receive quality instruction from this approach of practice. Besides the quality of the instruction received by students with disabilities, the continuous presence of a support person in the

classroom supporting the needs of the child with a disability has been reported to create drawbacks such as: overdependence of the child with disabilities; interference with teacher engagement and associated stigmatisation of the child receiving the support when not effectively negotiated (Giangreco et al., 2014). These outcomes were found to have often led to the development of less independent students whose potentials and strengths in the long run are not tapped into in classroom learning activities (Egilson & Traustadottir, 2009).

Notwithstanding the advantage of not having the continued interference of the resource people in the case teachers' classrooms, there was a lingering misunderstanding of the resource person's role. This often meant that when there were barriers to learning for the child with the disability, there was a less coordinated effort towards addressing such a barrier. An example of this is reflected in Mr. Jetur's interview. He states that one of the challenges he had in teaching English Language was how to express letter sounds to his students who are visually impaired. The resource person within the school is a braille specialist and also has a visual impairment. He perhaps is in a position to provide support or to explain to Mr. Jetur how these are expressed in braille based on his professional and personal experience. However, Mr. Jetur's response when asked about the possibility of working with the resource persons was:

"I'll figure out a way for myself and I have my reasons. Now maybe ehmmmm I should say now it is possible to do that especially where you have them teaching the same subject as your own. Like the two resource persons that we have, one of them is a specialist in social studies and the other person...a CRK teacher. So if you see it, asking a CRK teacher even among our own colleagues to come and serve as a resource person eh hh you know to teach your subject...sincerely speaking I have not invited them to come. And it has never occurred to me that I should ask, okay you too pass through this system. That also should have helped. Yes, I think it is something I should consider."
(Mr. Jetur)

Mr. Jetur has struggled with an aspect of teaching his curriculum content and yet was reluctant to seek possible support for how he could make the learning effective for all his students regardless of their ability to see the symbols he was using to convey the message. All he needed to do was to ask how he could effectively communicate the

vowel symbols based on the preferred learning means for his students with visual impairment. However, he seems to have only depended on his own ability to resolve any learning problem encountered by any of his students with a disability. He has not made efforts to draw from the skills of the resource person on the basis that the resource person teaches a different subject from his and thus is not in a position to contribute to his skills or subject content.

This, it can be argued leads to a scenario in which the child with the disability is excluded from a learning experience once the teacher is unable to personally work out how to resolve a particular learning challenge. Inclusive practice is enhanced if members of the school community are able to draw from each other's skills for the purpose of a shared vision which is finding ways of resolving problems so that learning experiences for all children are enhanced (Ainscow, 2007; Lindsay, 2003; Rouse, 2007; Rouse & Florian, 1996).

In discussion with the resource person at Gowon High School he stated that some of the teachers come to him for support. He does provide the support where necessary. However, this is dependent on the teacher's own initiative to approach the resource person. This finding is different from the one reported by Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) in their study. In their study, teachers and support staff had an understanding that enabled them to draw from each other's skills in a manner that enhanced the learning of students with disabilities in their classrooms. The difference between their findings and mine is that the level of skills and knowledge exchange they found is almost non-existent in the context of these case teachers' practice.

Similar to Mr. Jetur's above example is Miss Miriam's earlier example. Here they both leave the problem to the student who is then at a greater risk of being excluded from the learning experience. This issue could have also been resolved more effectively if there was a discussion with the resource person in that school rather than blaming the student for the faulty nature of her support equipment or just ignoring the fact that they are unable to communicate a concept to a child because of a disability. The resource person

has the responsibility of managing students' equipment and ensuring that they have all the required resources.

Ultimately, the problem is somehow placed back on the student for having a different learning style rather than on the barrier that needs to be addressed to enhance the child's ability to learn regardless of their peculiar learning need. If teachers and other stakeholders within the school context are unable to work together towards resolving the barriers being encountered by students with disabilities in the course of their learning endeavours, there remains the risk of blaming the problem of learning on the child as against how the particular learning needs of the child are interacting with the current circumstances to create a barrier to their effective participation in classroom learning (Skidmore, 2004; Thomas & Loxley, 2007). The emphasis in developing practice is on understanding the individual student in context with the purpose of providing interventions that remove or minimise the need to change from the student but instead focus on the changes needed in the system of which the child is a part (Johnson & Green, 2007).

In a different example, from case teachers at Awolowo School, the resource person is carving out of what type of support she can give to teachers. In this example, the student with a visual impairment is having problems with the typewriter that he is expected to use during a classroom assessment. The teachers allowed the student to use braille in their assessment so he could not only be part of what his peers were doing but also so he could be assessed on his learning progress. Having done that, the problem of supporting the case teachers to interpret what the student had done remained. One of the teachers, Mrs. Nehemiah, explains the response she had and how she is trying to resolve the issue:

“The resource person will not even allow you to come to that extent. She wouldn't do it. In fact let me be frank, she will not do it. And she will tell you frankly that I will not do it. That they should make arrangements for this thing, or otherwise maybe you, sometimes she says if you give me the question ahead of time, I will put the questions into Braille for you. I said it is not brailing the questions, it is them doing it in class that is where the work is...it is either I bring another student with a visual impairment to do it because the resource person will not do it...she is helping the students. She is really

helping the students not the teachers. Because if I set my questions, I type my notes, I will give her the soft copy. She will now Braille it and give it to them. So she is helpful to the students. If she is helpful to the teachers, things like this she should be able to help me interpret it. Because if I give it back to the student, he must have done the corrections. The other alternative I have here is to bring Gang [i.e. the student concerned] here... it is either I bring another student with a visual impairment to do it because the resource person will not do it.” (Mrs. Nehemiah)

Mrs. Nehemiah here expresses how receiving support in terms of the teachers’ work can make a difference as against only providing support towards the student with the disability. This is a reflection of how the resource person can deter any form of support and the possibility of developing new ways that could enhance the ability of the child with a disability to be fully engaged with all aspects of classroom learning. This finding is different from that which was reported by Spratt and Florian (2013) in their study. In their study, they reported how teachers worked effectively with the support staff and they were able to develop the needed support for the student to make the transition and participate in the classroom with their peers. The main issue here is about how the skills and knowledge of the resource person can be used to support teachers’ work in regular classrooms and how the resource person can see their role as that of supporting the teachers in their classroom practice.

This problem of developing and sustaining collaborative partnerships in the learning support process between teachers and other professionals within the school context is an area in which the development of inclusive practice has experienced a challenge (Giangreco et al., 2014; Nel, Engelbrecht, Nel, & Tlale, 2013). More often, this challenge is associated with the misunderstanding of the role of the support being provided. In most contexts the nature of practice that defines the roles of support personnel is that in which the support is directed towards the student. This is reflected in the extensive overview provided by Giangreco et al. (2014) on how support is provided for students with disabilities in different countries and schools. What is lacking is the understanding of support as the provision of a structure which is an integral part of the ongoing functioning of the school aimed at empowering teachers so they can develop preventive and enhancing strategies, as well as the necessary skills to address specific

difficulties in their work (Johnson & Green, 2007). The focus should remain on how the responsibility can be shared towards effective learning (Chiner & Cardona, 2013). The system of directing support towards the child with a disability was the nature of practice that was evident in the context of all the case teachers. This is also reflected in Mrs. Nehemiah's comments above about how helpful the resource person is to the students and not the teachers.

6.4.1 Resource persons' perspectives of their roles

A similar perspective was also evident in the resource persons' description of how they perceived their roles and responsibilities.

"Yeah, my official role first of all is ehh, to ensure that first of all the special students are been assisted in their academic work. That is to make sure that those of them that are having difficulty in whatever area, if it is the area that I can assist with, I have to assist them. The problem is that some of them they complain, they murmur. They don't even know who to contact with their distress, but most of the time when they come and share some of their problems with us we go ahead to assist them. And they know very well that we are here for them. Sometimes they come straight to us." (Mr. Ameh, Resource Person at Gowon High School)

While interviewing and interacting with the resource people in the context of Gowon High School and Awolowo School, there were some stated exceptions with some teachers who approach the resource person to seek their support in addressing specific problems with regards to the learning of students with disabilities in their classrooms. This they explained to a certain degree depended on the teachers who take the initiative after encountering certain barriers.

"They do come to us. At times when they come like that with such a complaint. We look at the nature of the complaint, like mathematics for instance, there is some equipment. And at the same time, most things we do tell them, those regular teachers when they do come, like those visually handicapped students, you know they learn a lot when they have a practical feeling of things. Since they are not seeing it, instead they just have a mere description, you make them touch and feel the, this thing. So most of the things we tell them that even if they construct those things, we tell them to allow them to feel and to touch it and feel, it will give them a little bit of insight into what is being done. They do

come, like a particular teacher teaching French. He said because of the way the alphabet and the phonetic symbols in French are written, it is very difficult to get. We kind of encourage him and encourage the students as well. Even if they cannot get the exact symbol, at least they should devise a way to improvise those symbols and they should try to record the lesson so that they can be carried along as well.” (Mr. Ameh, Resource Person at Gowon High School)

This presents a promising possibility of more collaborative support towards addressing barriers to learning for teachers at Gowon High School. The same however cannot be said for Awolowo School. I have already illustrated an example of a response earlier with the extract from Mrs. Nehemiah’s interview.

Further into perceiving the role of the resource person as that in which they support students only, the resource person at Awolowo School has a different approach to resolving issues with regards to the learning experiences of the students with a visual impairment in the classroom. She on the one hand has assured her students to trust her as being their advocate for whatever problems they are having in their classroom learning.

“...I tried my best you know to build confidence in my students. That is helping them to trust me and they have that confidence. As a result of that, there is nothing that goes on in the classroom; this teacher is not doing us well. I will forward it and follow-up the teacher. Sir/Ma, this is the complaint from one of my student. Why not try this method and see if the child will be carried along?” (Miss Serah, Resource Person, Awolowo School)

Assuring students of the available support and the need to share their challenges is a good strategy that can enhance the participation of students with disabilities in classroom learning. However, forwarding and following up the teacher in a bid to challenge their approach needs to be done tactfully and not in a manner that appears confrontational. A response from the school authority, which is often towards the teacher also reinforces the situation.

It can be seen that the resource person has placed herself between the teacher and the student. Instead of making efforts to develop an understanding relationship with the teachers, she emphasises her relationship with the students and the need for her students

to trust and work with her. This places the students in situations where they sometimes do not give feedback to their teachers about their learning but discuss it with the resource person instead. It then in turn disturbs the relationship of working together that the teachers need to develop a community of learners in their classrooms. In this instance, case teachers do not really pay attention to the feedback from students for the purpose of improving their learning experiences but focus on how they can prevent being in a situation where they will be queried on their work. This situation is particularly prevalent in the context of Awolowo School because the school queries and holds teachers accountable for the progress of all learners (a common practice in private schools especially if they are high fee paying).

For case teachers in this school, they on the other hand currently see the resource person as someone they have to work with to avoid any trouble and any form of confrontation from the school authority on their work. This is because the resource person tends to want to take up any complaint to the school authority if the student is having problems with classroom learning. An example of such a perception is reflected in the example below:

“Because there is no other way, we have to work with her. Because there is nothing we can do. If we do not talk, these children will go and meet her, they will tell her some things, she will report us to the school authority as if we are not cooperating with her. So it is better that sometimes before they go and report she will say Mr. Lotan has come here, he has told me what you are doing...” Mr. Lotan

The above example presents an instance where it appears as if the teacher is collaborating with the resource person but in the actual sense the purpose of approaching the resource person is not really to collaborate towards better inclusive practice but to shift the blame from one person to the other or just to mention the problems being encountered. The latter approach to collaboration has also been reported elsewhere as a common practice with teachers in developing context (Mukhopadhyay et al., 2012; Nel et al., 2013; Singal, 2009). In these instances, the nature of collaboration focused more on teachers casually discussing with the support personal only when they have the

opportunity to do so. However, with regards to the former, the emphasis on blame-shifting is also reflected in Mr. Lotan's comment.

"So I will meet her and tell her. This is the problem I am having with this boy. This is the problem I am having with him. Yes because you will not have an excuse. You know when you don't use the right instrument; already you can't get the right result. Then he will now tell you it's because I was not having the right instrument. So I will not want anybody to get me in that area. I will want you to have it, so that by the time you come back with, maybe you have 40 you will know that that is your strength. It will not be because I do not have the right instrument, because I have been telling you to get it. Ahhh"

Here Mr. Lotan shifts the blame and towards the end of the quote indicates how doing this will mean that he does not take responsibility for the outcome of learning that might emerge. While it is true that if the child is provided with all the necessary resources to learn that will facilitate the learning, I think there can be the possibility of not exploring what could be other barriers to learning or less involvement in reflecting on how a child's learning can be enhanced in such an approach to resolving learning difficulties. The provision of resources that support students learning might in itself become a barrier to their learning if not used creatively (Florian, 2014a). Moreover, the child in the midst of this kind of collaboration might end up being the one being blamed for the difficulties they experience or for their learning outcomes. This goes back to my earlier point about placing the problem of learning on the child on the basis of their learning needs, a practice which is not inclusive in its nature.

Additionally, this situation can also be distressing for teachers in their own work, effectiveness and sometimes attitude towards having a child with a disability in their classroom. This distress was expressed by one of the case teachers.

You see the issue is that everybody has his own perspective. What I may not mind another person may mind. And at some point it is that person that normally assists them that presents problems and pushes the problems back to you...Personally, if I am opportune, I will tell her the problem because, it is like telling that person that you do not know what you are doing. Yes. So I don't feel comfortable with that. That is the only aspect that at a point I will say oh if I don't have them. Because, you know these

students, they are smart, if you are backing them, whatever they do you back them. Someone you have given assignment to over some time, submit, submit, the person will not submit, you keep pursuing the person and at a point you report that person the blame will push it back to you. As if you do not know anything. That was the aspect that I felt somehow. But at the same time, it is not their fault. (Mr. Weng)

Clearly, Mr. Weng does not appear to be happy with the current situation. Teachers as human beings also need to feel comfortable and relaxed doing their job both for their well-being and for the well-being of all the students in their classrooms. Besides, inclusive practice needs an approach that focuses on how the members of the school community connect with each other and create a relaxed, supportive atmosphere that enables everyone to function effectively (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007; Corbett, 2000). A similar concern about having to work with another adult with regards to teaching and learning has been reported by Egilson and Traustadottir (2009) in their study. Some teachers in their study found the idea of working with another adult in the context of teaching and learning to be a burden. In a different instance, Engelbrecht, Oswald, and Forlin (2006) also reported how difficult it was for teachers in South African schools to develop a collaborative effort that can support their practices within their different school context. This problem was further reasserted in a study indicating that teachers in South African schools also expressed the opinion that they had less self-efficacy in developing collaborative efforts compared to teachers in Finland (Savolainen et al., 2012).

However, the reverse was the case when it came to managing students with diverse needs and behaviour in classrooms. This result Savolainen et al. (2012) explain is an outcome of a system in which teachers and support professionals are trained in or have developed their practices in systems that are disjointed and contrary to the notion of shared responsibilities. In general, collaboration between teachers and resource people, or even teachers to teachers was not well established in the data generated in this study. This Oswald (2007) argues indicates the need for a system that trains teachers in problem solving and communication skills so as to enhance their ability to collaborate and make decisions both with colleagues and with other professionals within the school

context. This I will argue will create a context in which collaboration will be understood and approached as a catalytic process used in interactive relationships among individuals working together towards a mutually defined shared outcome. This has to be developed as a changing and ongoing process rather than been developed as an end in itself (Engelbrecht, 2007).

In this chapter I have discussed the three principles underpinning inclusive practice, indicating where they were evident in the data set and where they were not evident and explaining why. In Chapter seven I continue presenting the findings that emerged as I address the second sub-research question in this thesis.

CHAPTER SEVEN

TEACHERS' BELIEFS, KNOWLEDGE AND ACTIONS

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I address the second sub-research question: *In what ways are the elements of 'believing, knowing and doing' interacting in these teachers classroom practices?* Moreover, I also discuss some of the other aspects of case teachers' practices that I identified through the process of data analysis as important in understanding some of their current practices, as well as aspects of practice that serve as barriers towards the enhancement of teachers' practices. To this effect, this chapter is divided into two main sections. In section 7.2, I explore the interrelationship between case teachers' beliefs, knowledge and actions. Section 7.3 is comprised of the other issues that I identified as important to case teachers' developing inclusive practice.

7.2 Teachers' knowledge, beliefs and actions

While reviewing the literature on inclusive classroom practice in chapter three, I reflected on Rouse's (2007, 2008) idea that teachers' knowledge, beliefs and actions are interrelated and that the presence of at least two of these leads to the development of the third element, especially when teachers have a 'just do it' approach to inclusive practice. In section 3.3 I also discussed the work of Jordan et al. (2009). In their research work, Jordan et al. (2009) identified that teachers' beliefs about the nature of disabilities and their roles and responsibilities in the education of children with disabilities in part influences their ability to develop practices that are effective as well as inclusive of all children.

In this section I present the outcome of analysing the data generated. I interpreted teachers' understanding of the presence of a child with a disability in their classroom as their beliefs about inclusive practice, their understanding of what they are doing as their knowledge of inclusive practice and what I observe them do in the classroom as their actions.

7.2.1 Influence of teachers' beliefs on their actions

In my analysis of the entire data set, it became evident that all the teachers in this study did have at least two of these elements of knowing, doing and believing in their development of inclusive classroom practice. They were all already doing some sort of inclusive practice. It was either their belief or knowledge that varied and influenced or was reflected in their actions. I illustrate this with these first two different examples drawn from two case teachers: Mr Absalom and Miss Hulda.

Vignette 3: Mr. Absalom

Mr. Absalom teaches Mathematics to year 9 students at Awolowo School. In his interview, he discussed how he believes that learning in classrooms is about students being able to share their knowledge and support each other through their learning experiences.

“If I just come to their class with the solution, I write a problem on the board, I write the solution on the board without any explanation, will they understand? No. So that is the reason why I say you explain and let us know how you got this. I also believe that there are some things that they can explain that their colleagues will get better than me”.

In this observed class, Mr. Absalom's underlying principle or understanding of teaching and learning is reflected in how he managed the classroom interactions. The lesson observed had a focus on learning about 'rational and non-rational numbers' and the classroom context had two students with a visual impairment. The classroom comprised 26 students.

Mr. Absalom introduced an example to the class, and then he provided an opportunity for the students to ask questions when they were confused. For each question asked he responded and elaborated on the response for the whole class to hear. At different intervals as the class progressed, I observed that Mr. Absalom called on students who volunteered to respond to questions asked by their fellow students or by him. He asked these volunteers to explain on the board for all to see and hear. In one instance, one of

the students was working out a sum on the board without talking. Mr Absalom who had retreated to stand behind the class emphasised '*explain to us let us hear what you are doing*'. Mr. Absalom knew that most of the others were seeing what the students were doing but then for the students with a visual impairment, they could follow the lesson successfully if they could hear and follow what is happening visually. However, Mr. Absalom did not emphasise the fact that some cannot see so speak out. This could have marked out the students with a visual impairment as being different because their particular learning need is emphasised for all to take note of.

Mr. Absalom supported and added to his students' contribution by directing them when they were diverting away from the point being discussed or when they were going astray in their working out of the mathematical equations. This support was provided throughout the lesson. By doing this, Mr. Absalom was able to firstly draw on students' knowledge and also help them be confident in making contributions when they are able to. In one instance it was observed that while a student was discussing on the board, he made an error but the teacher did not discourage the student. Mr. Absalom asked the student to hold on and then he completed the equation by correcting the error made and explaining more to the whole class what they were supposed to do.

It was observed that students were keen to respond and contribute in the way that most of them were volunteering to respond to Mr. Absalom. For the students with disabilities, they were also observed to have contributed in various instances by responding to the teacher's question and the teacher went ahead to provide support and explanations when the student with the disability concerned made a mistake in their response. That way the teacher's support and request for contributions was not limited or restricted to certain students or just towards students with disabilities. Doing that could have also stigmatised the students with disabilities amongst their peers as the only students who need support in the classroom. Secondly, the students were allowed to express what they had learnt and the areas where they were confused or had doubts in their learning. I observed Mr. Absalom addressing the questions that were raised.

In one instance Mr. Absalom asked the student concerned to meet him after the class for further explanations. This, he explained to her, was because what she was asking about was an entirely different topic that could derail the whole class into something they are not up to learning now. This approach was observed as common amongst teachers in all contexts in the school. They provided specific support and separate instruction only when the need arose, even if the child has a disability. The assumption is that students are all able to learn effectively in the classroom context. Such support is also only available in the student's own free time and not while other classes are being conducted. The students' contributions were rewarded by Mr. Absalom by either asking the others to clap or a word of praise from the teacher. Sometimes he acknowledged the right response, wrote it on the board and continued with the lesson without any form of reward provided. However, this reward was sometimes protested against by some of the

students. For instance, when he asked them to clap for a right response from a student, some of the students clapped while others protested that he had not told them to do that before, so why should they clap for someone who knows the answer? The student, who happened to be one of the students with a disability, immediately responded as soon as the teacher asked the question even though the question was not specifically directed to anyone. In response, the teacher apologised and instructed all the students not to respond unless he specifically asked them to do so.

In this class it was also observed that when the teacher asked a student to respond and discuss on the board for everyone to hear, some of the students were either trying to draw attention to themselves so that they could also respond or contribute. In some cases, they tried to discourage the student by asking what the student was doing instead of paying attention to what the student was doing. In this instance another student responded that she was learning so they should not disturb what was happening. The scenario Mr. Absalom later explained is the problem he sometimes has with his students.

“Yes they don’t learn from each other. That is the problem... I might have spent 5 periods in the class, some of you may not understand anything but by meeting each other you can get everything. And since they have decided not to learn from each other and I know that it is important, I have to force them to teach each other even in the class... They want to hide some things, so that I can be better than you. I do tell them that if you hide what you know, he hides what he knows. You don’t gain from his own knowledge, you don’t gain my own knowledge, so that means you are only limited to what you know and I am limited to what I know and our knowledge will not be full. You understand. I do tell them that, but they have not gotten the message. So I have to force them to teach one another in class”.

From the above interview extract, it can be seen that Mr. Absalom is still struggling with the problem of trying to get the students to become a community of learners who are able to learn and draw from each other’s knowledge or to support each other in learning in class. He is also still in the process of trying to make the students understand that they are equal members of the class and can make a meaningful contribution to enhance the learning experiences that they all have as students.

Regardless of this problem, in approaching his teaching in such a manner, Mr. Absalom focused on what is to be learnt and how it can be learnt without differentiating who is learning what and who cannot learn it. Students are therefore able to respond and make contributions. It is these contributions that he also uses as his formative feedback to monitor the progress they are making. After the observed class proceeded a bit, a number of questions were asked by students and more students wanted to ask more questions. Mr. Absalom then addressed them by acknowledging that their questions had helped him realise a common misunderstanding they appear to be having. This led Mr.

Absalom to re-explain the concept they were learning. In doing this he was able to use the feedback he was gaining through the questions the students were asking as an assessment that informed his action to address the learning problem or difficulty that was been experienced by the students. Despite the above and the nature of the interaction that was taking place in the class, some students fell asleep halfway through the class. Mr. Absalom asked them to stand at the back of the class as their punishment for sleeping. Moreover, he also scolded the whole class about making noise and doing other things that leads to them wasting time that they could use to learn what they are supposed to be learning.

It was also observed that in this class the students with visual impairments also made their notes in braille while the others were writing. Even when they seemed not to write on the grounds that they were listening, Mr. Absalom insisted that they should make notes in braille too as the others were writing, since mathematics is a subject that you learn best by doing and not just listening. His argument is that there are no exceptions to learning mathematics.

“Participating the way every other person is participating. They keep quiet and they don’t write. Yes they do that mostly, and most teachers will sympathise with them because of their condition. But, you become aware of the fact that they write meaningfully as other children without a visual impairment write. You understand, in that case they are in the same condition, you understand me, so if they are not writing in the class it is laziness... You understand me. It is laziness. They do write. Most times when I am saying something they will say repeat it. Because they want to put it down and when you repeat it, they quickly put it down. You give them CE and they write it down. That means when you are giving them notes they should write it down, they can read it, why will he not write it down. Ah they have to write it”.

In doing this Mr. Absalom does not just leave the students to take the initiative to participate, but he pushes them into becoming participants in the classroom learning.

Mr. Absalom stated his belief that all children have diverse needs and that having a child with an identified disability whose specific needs must be accounted for in classroom learning does not delay the progress of the classroom learning activities. He also believes that students are able to learn when they draw from each other. In observing his classroom, Mr. Absalom’s classroom practice is structured in such a manner that students can draw and learn from each other. He did this in a manner that the information gained from feedback was used to support further learning. He paid attention to students’ responses and elaborated on contributions made by adding to their

feedback. Vignette 3 illustrates how he was able to allow his students to contribute without limiting contributions from specific students. Regardless of his intentions in how he manages the class, it can also be seen that there were some barriers that were embedded in how the students responded and some of the attitudes displayed by the students. I return to this barrier in section 7.3 of this chapter.

From the example presented in Vignette 3, it can be seen how Mr. Absalom's belief and understanding about how learning can be achieved is reflected in how he has structured the nature of interactions that take place in his classroom. This reflects how his belief in the presence of a child with a disability and his knowledge of teaching practices that are effective for all to learn relate to his actions in the classroom. This finding reflects Westbrook et al. (2013) earlier finding that effective classroom practices in developing countries are developed through an interaction between teachers' thinking, what they see as the outcome of their practice and their actions. In this example Mr. Absalom sees the learning needs that must be addressed towards ensuring that the class becomes a community of learners who can draw from each other's knowledge and experiences. This has led him to develop a process of interaction that provided the opportunity for everyone in the class to be part of the learning activity. His use of open questioning, encouraging students' questions and expanding students' responses is also one of the effective pedagogical practices identified by Westbrook et al. (2013) as an effective strategy used by teachers in the context of classrooms in different developing countries.

In a different example drawn from Miss Hulda's practice, I present an example of how case teachers' elements of beliefs, knowledge and actions interrelate.

Vignette 4: Miss Hulda

Miss Hulda teaches year 8 students business studies at Azikiwe School. In many ways, Miss Hulda's class was similar to Mr. Absalom's discussed above. It was observed that she asked questions, asked for contributions and responses from her students throughout the lesson as it progressed. The class context that was observed and discussed here was comprised of Miss Hulda evoking visible responses from students and then elaborating, clarifying and adding to what had been mentioned by the students in their responses. It was observed that the

discussion was open; the class was calm, welcoming and relaxed. Students contributed freely, asking questions and drawing from their personal experiences to make clarifications in relation to what they were learning, of which the topics were 'the qualities of a good receptionist' to start with and from which they proceeded to discuss 'the different dress codes for different activities' and they later proceeded and discussed 'the appropriate dress codes for different activities'. It was observed that this interaction included all the students. The student with the disability in the class was observed to have made contributions as the other students did. The class had a student with a visual impairment as the only identified student with a disability. Allowing all students to contribute and creating opportunities for students to participate in a relaxed environment is relevant to developing a community of learners that become more confident about making contributions to the learning process.

However, unlike Mr. Absalom whose intention is to create a community of learners who are able to learn from each other, in Miss Hulda's case she sees the use of questions and answers to serve her own purpose and this helps her assess if any form of learning and progress has been made by students. While she does this with all her students, she explained in her interview that she also deliberately uses it to direct questions at specific students so she can be sure that they are also following what is going on in the class. In the context of this observed class, the process of asking specific students questions did not appear to stigmatise any student in any way. A range of students were provided with the opportunity to respond and make contributions as the need arose. In doing this Miss Hulda is able to include some form of formative assessment in the teaching and learning process which is useful in determining the progress students are making in the learning process.

Also, when it came to the illustration of what she was talking about she used a textbook (which she borrowed from one of the students) to show the pictures round the class. In doing this, she walked round the class holding on to the textbook and then explained what the pictures looked like to the students (explaining more). While she did this she explained to all the students. This meant that she did not just show the pictures to those who could see and then explain the picture to the visually impaired students. She instead showed the picture round and also explained it to everyone, thereby combining both processes in a way that all the needs of the students are met. No one is seen as needing something different from the others, but it seems that both methods are needed and everyone can draw from what applies to them as individuals.

"I am doing it so that she will get the idea. Ehhen because if I did not go to her, if I did not stand by her own seat and tell her vividly, she would not understand much because it has to do with pictures and she cannot see. But when you just say that it is having this and that and this is the type, she will now get the idea."

You will now draw her attention” Miss Hulda explained.

In observing what Miss Hulda did, I noticed that she actually slowed down her pace while explaining at the desk where the student with a visual impairment was on before moving on to other students. Regardless of the above practice of Miss Hulda, it can be said that her underpinning assumption of teaching and learning is in some ways influencing her developing practice.

Her overall mind-set which can be likened to ‘an input and output’ process of teaching was reflected in her interview. “... *if you are teaching and you realise that students are not getting you or when you assess them, you will see that they are poor, maybe you write first and you find out that they are not able to pass, maybe you change your method so that they will understand. Because your essence is not for them to fail, the essence is for them to pass...*” she explains.

In the preceding quote, it appears that Miss Hulda’s assumption is that the students’ response to her is evidence that the learning objective is being achieved. The focus here is both on having an outcome as the end point and also using it as a source of information that can be used to direct or inform further learning activities. Miss Hulda also reflected a sense of making an effort towards being effective in her practice by being reflective and exploring other methods of teaching that can be effective for students. *If you realise that she is a struggling student, then it means that you will have to put in some effort to make sure that the student brings in their best*” she explained. However, she also holds the notion that as a teacher there is a limit to how much you can influence your students’ achievement and progress.

“Though you as the teacher have to categorise them as a class... whether you like it or not as a teacher whether in a higher institution, whether in a secondary school, whether in a primary sector. You will find out that not everyone will pass...”

This presents a contradiction with reflecting and making an effort to ensure that students are able to bring out the best in them. It can be argued that this notion that some students are not able to make progress in significant ways might influence what Miss Hulda is willing to do with regards to trying new ways of working with students to ascertain the actual progress they have made or can make in learning. Even though, for Miss Hulda, this also means being flexible in determining what progress students have made in their individual learning. For her it meant being flexible, considerate and understanding in assessing students’ progress, especially for a student with a disability. While being flexible is important and is good practice, it can also be counterproductive in teachers’ practice especially if used to polarise the learning of some children because of a disability. Miss Hulda’s understanding of the child with a visual impairment in

her class was that the child was actually supposed to be in a special school. *"...they don't need to be treated equally...These people are supposed to be in a special school ..."*

An instance of this is reflected towards the end of the question and answer session of this observed class. While Miss Hulda asked questions and students responded to summarise what has been learnt; she directed the last question to the student with a visual impairment. The question asked required three responses and the other two had already been provided by two other students. The student with the disability did not know the third response but the teacher asked her to mention any of what had already been said. The student did mention what was already mentioned by others. Miss Hulda explained this as her being flexible in determining the individual student's progress. *"Like yesterday you were in the class, she was to give us the last type of dressing style and she was not able to tell us. I now told her to just tell us any one from what she understands. She just told us. So I try to know whether she understands or not during that evaluation. And if they don't understand they ask. Like this one Hudung and the other one, if they don't understand they also ask"* she explained. What is not known in this instance is if the student did not actually learn from the class or if she learnt but actually the flexibility in determining the progress that she had made provided by teacher was appropriate.

From the example presented in *Vignette 4* it is apparent that Miss Hulda demonstrates a sense of wanting to draw from her students' knowledge and apply the use of formative assessment in determining the progress of her students. There is also a sense that she knows how to create a suitable learning context for all students as well as a sense of awareness of her need to be reflective in her practice. This demonstrated her knowledge about what to do and how to manage classroom learning. She also had clarity about what her role is as a teacher, which is to ensure that the students are actually learning and making progress. All these aspects have been identified by Westbrook et al. (2013) in their studies as effective practices in the classroom context in developing countries. However, Miss Hulda tends to be more focused on how these processes are useful for her as the teacher compared to how these processes can be used to develop a community of learners who are able to draw from each other and through the process of interaction that is taking place learn and expand their understanding. Developing a community of

learners as already discussed in chapter three is an important aspect of inclusive classroom practice.

Moreover, Miss Hulda thinks that children with disabilities are not expected to be in regular schools and thus are not to be treated equally with their peers. This understanding and belief informs her flexibility in determining progress in learning. Flexibility in classroom activities and in determining progress, especially if there are learners with particular learning needs is an important aspect of inclusive classroom practice (Hayward, 2014). However, the problem with such an understanding held by Miss Hulda, and her assumption that students need to be in categories in every class based on their progress is that it can limit the level of expectations teachers have towards their students. There is a need to be vigilant in order to prevent such flexibility becoming a source of curriculum polarisation. In such polarisation the learning experiences of students are differentiated and often limited for some students compared to the other students because of the limits set for them by the teachers (Boaler et al., 2000).

In their study, Boaler et al. (2000) identified how categorising students led teachers to overlook the learning experiences of some of the students in their classrooms. In this instance, Miss Hulda assumes that the student with a disability is allowed to not provide the expected response because she has a visual impairment. This can be a limitation to Miss Hulda's knowledge of disability and how it can influence learning. Referring back to Miss Hulda's belief about the role of a student in enhancing their learning experience, especially if the student has a disability (as explained earlier in section 6.3.2) means that even though she endeavours to provide an opportunity for all to contribute and participate in her class, she holds on to the idea that this depends on the child's ability to be a 'good student'. Also her belief that not all students will progress as expected means that she has an assumption that limits how far she thinks her efforts as a teacher can go in influencing students' learning. Her current knowledge and belief inform and are reflected in her practice.

7.2.2 Influence of teachers' knowledge on their actions

I draw on two other examples from the practice from Miss Miriam and Mr. Seba in Vignettes 5 and 6 respectively to present examples of how teachers' knowledge influences other aspects of their classroom practice.

Vignette 5: Miss Miriam

Miss Miriam teaches Year 8 students computer science at Azikiwe School. Similar to Miss Hulda's class discussed above, Miss Miriam's class that is being discussed here started with a question and answer session where she tried to gain an overview of what the students had learnt from their previous class. She demanded answers from specific students whom she calls by their name in most instances. In other instances, she asked the questions and the students all responded in chorus answers, collectively as a class. In her interview, Miss Miriam explained that she does this in her class to ascertain that at least her efforts with the class are not completely in vain. *"...one thing that works for me is at the end of the whole class, or the whole term, or a whole topic, I make sure that I ask them questions about what I taught them and I receive responses. And if they do not give me what I want, they might be using their own words but if they are giving some key words that needed to be there, and then somebody comes up just to defend them, then I will be comfortable that I actually taught them..."* she explained.

As Miss Miriam explained in the above interview extract, it was observed that not all the questions she asked were effectively responded to and in response she reminded the students about the fact that they are learning so they do not become completely illiterate later in life and because they will also have to take their Basic Education Certificate Examinations which they were due for in the next academic session. The class had a few students who were just newly transferred from other schools and a student with a visual impairment. Miss Miriam tried to ask if the transferred students had learnt any of what she was trying to ask the class at their former schools. However, before they could respond she quickly added, *"Don't worry; you will pick it up in time"*. By implication she indicated that they should just follow and they will learn whatever is expected of them over time.

The lesson structure of this observed class was divided into two halves. In the first half of the lesson, Miss Miriam explained what they were supposed to learn. This was *'classification of computers by type, size and generation'*. She did this without writing or using the board. After explaining, she asked questions to which most of the students she had directed the questions to could not respond. Most of them were quiet. In some instances, it was observed that had to force them to respond by threatening to punish them before they made an attempt to respond. Some were mildly punished (for example asked to stand up) for not responding as expected.

In her interview she explained her understanding that teaching is a difficult job that might not be a calling for all. *"...the experience of teaching is actually challenging. In that sometimes you find students looking confused. Probably the topic is new; you have heard some words. You wouldn't even know if they are understanding it or not. Sometimes it could be on the part of the teacher, the teacher herself, sometimes I feel if I am occupied the whole day, it can be very stressful. And then when I am tired, you know the way you react to the students, it will affect them. You come to the class and then you are not really strong, it's like you are forced to do something, it could affect them. They themselves, they might not be really interested... I have never taught in a secondary school. I am just starting and... somebody said teaching is a calling. Sometimes you might have it so well. You might have it in your head. But bringing it out could be the issue..."*

Although based on the explanation to the student's response that is provided by Miss Miriam above, it can be said from the observed class that her class is a bit teacher focused and that the students appear to be less participative. This made the students a bit withdrawn compared to how Miss Hulda structured her class which was discussed earlier. Miss Hulda's class allowed students to make contributions and ask questions as the class proceeded. Also in the above interview extract, Miss Miriam reflects her perception of what teaching is to her. She sees it as a challenging task that might be done more effectively by some teachers and not necessarily by all teachers. This is the mind set with which she approaches her job.

During the other half of the lesson Miss Miriam asked for a student volunteer to write out the notes on the board for the others to copy from. A few students volunteered but the teacher also tried to make the newly transferred students write on the board for others. The students however protested against the teacher's suggestions and the students suggested who they wanted to write the notes for them. Their decision was based on how easily they could comprehend the selected student's writing on the board. Initially, the teacher did not allow the students to volunteer and make their decision. She tried to force a representative to work on their behalf to copy out the notes for everyone. This led to a situation where some students were asked to sit down because their writing could not be understood which could have implications for the self-worth of the students concerned. She could have allowed those who had initially volunteered to do what they were confident in doing.

While the others copied from the writing on board, the teacher sat beside the visually impaired student and read through what was being written so she could also braille her notes as the others wrote. It appeared that the teacher is providing support to the student with a disability obviously which marks the student out as needing something different from the others. She could have easily read out the notes for all the students in the class to write down while the visually impaired student also wrote alongside the others. However, this approach can also be linked to Miss Miriam's assumption that the child with the disability is different and thus needs something different from the others.

“...after giving them a particular paragraph, I will just go back to Hudung and then she was very fast. I will dictate and she will just, she uses her Braille to write. When she has finished, I go back to the class...” Miss Miriam explained her understanding of what she has to do. From the statement above, it can be said that she does not see the student with a disability as needing the same thing as the others and thus this student needs to be attended to separately on her own, while the others work separately as a different group.

While this approach appears to be stigmatising towards the child who is being marked as different, it was also observed that while she read the notes to the student with a visual impairment, she often pointed out to the volunteer on the board when whatever she wrote was not clear, clarified what the student had written, corrected her spelling errors or punctuations marks, and made the others copying to all take note of the corrections too. Towards the end of the class, Miss Miriam returned to the front of the class and gave a short explanation to add to what they had already gone through and copied. However, this time she sat on one of the desks in front rather than standing and moving in front of the class like she had done in the first half of the class. By now, the students were becoming more and more restless, murmuring and making noise.

She punished them all (with the exception of the volunteer whom the teacher exempted and the student with a visual impairment who was still tidying up her notes so had not joined the others). The students asked questions and contributed on the different types of computers. The teacher used this questions and answers session to finish up the lesson.

Vignette 6: Mr. Seba

Mr. Seba teaches year 9 students Basic Technology at Azikiwe School. The context of the observed class was a class on ‘isometric drawings’. There were 38 students in this class. In many ways, the approach of this observed class is similar to Miss Miriam’s class described in *Vignette 5*. He divided the class into two halves. In the first half he explained the concept of isometric drawings and in the second half, he made the students write out notes on what he had already explained. However, his classes were calm and less tense when compared to the atmosphere in Miss Miriam’s class. I observed that the students, including the student with a visual impairment, asked questions when they were in doubt. The class followed the usual fashion of starting off with questions to gain an overview of the last class, and then proceeded to the lesson for that day. However, while the teacher was trying to explain the concept of the observed lesson more clearly to the class, he did the following.

Mr. Seba had already come to the class with a cardboard box. He explained to the entire class by drawing on the board. Afterwards, he handed the cardboard box to the student with a visual impairment and asked him to feel the box and from there he explained to the student concerned what each part of the box meant with regards to an isometric drawing. Even though this provided a basic understanding that encouraged the student with the visual impairment to participate, ask questions and make contributions while the class proceeded, it was the manner in which the teacher used the teaching aid only for the student with the visual impairment that singled the student out from the others in

the classroom. It marked the student out as different and thus needing something else to enhance his understanding and that did not apply to the other students. He could have just presented the box to the whole class and allowed them to pass it round or take it round like Miss Hulda did with her teaching aid. That could have enhanced the understanding of the entire class, and yet still supported the student who needed to feel what the diagram might look like. The only other teacher who also used teaching aids was Mr. Weng at Awolowo School but he came to class and handed the aids to the class and asked them to pass them round for everyone to feel the different materials. This meant that all the students were able to feel the materials as they passed them round. Mr. Weng then used them as the basis to continue with the lesson for the day. That way no one was seen as different since they had all felt the material including the students with disabilities.

Moreover, in the instance of Mr. Seba's class, during the second half of the class while he made the students copy the notes from what had been taught in the first half, the student with a disability was not writing anything. The others took notes to follow Mr. Seba while he read them out (this is in contrast to Miss Miriam's approach who decided to ask for a volunteer while she supported the student with a disability to write her notes). Mr. Seba at some point took a bit of time to go round and see what the other students were writing and drawing but did not pay particular attention to the student with the visual impairment. To further elaborate his notes more explanations were provided but by then the teacher had forgotten the student with the visual impairment and continued explaining on the board. The student with the disability later asked a question related to what the teacher was explaining and added *'I don't know what it looks like sir.'* This it can be said was to remind the teacher indirectly that he had not taken into account the student's need for that section of the class activity.

At the end of the class to round up Mr. Seba gave the class an exercise to submit later. As soon as he finished reading out what they were expected to do, the student with the visual impairment requested his: *Sir when are you going to give me mine?* Once again the student is marked out. Mr. Seba later explained, *"If there are any questions that had to do with drawing, they don't draw. You have to give them a theoretical question and they answer it orally"*.

Regardless of this understanding, Mr. Seba appears to be very supportive of his students' needs and encouraged them to be the best they can be.

"So I called the two of them and I told them not to feel - why they are in this condition? You understand. They should not feel that way. Thank God that their parents are ready to sponsor them. So what they should just do is they should just concentrate... So my own philosophy to them is that, they should be firm... never be discouraged. In any aspect never be discouraged. That is it. Actually, you see they too, they should be part of us. Whatever the students are doing they are supposed to be doing it. Now in their own way, despite the fact that they cannot see, you understand ba. I have to put in extra effort to ensure that they understand what exactly that topic is all about... they can be in the office and be taken as a consultant. They can be giving instructions... I believe if these children are opportune to see, they will perform 100% better than these ones that are

seeing. That is what I am saying. So if I do not create more time for them, you may discover that I might deny them their right or knowledge...”

The above quote reflects how Mr. Seba understands the presence of a child with a disability in his classroom and how he makes an effort to support and encourage them as individual students. There is an expression of his belief in the ability of all children regardless of a disability to achieve. He encourages them to pursue their best, expressing his belief in their ability to achieve and does not use their current state of progress to judge their future achievement or progress. In the second half of the quote, Mr. Seba expresses his belief in the appropriateness of the presence and participation of children with a disability in regular classrooms. Furthermore, he expresses how their presence is not on the basis of an assumed sameness but he acknowledges that diversity in learning need should also be accounted for in classroom learning. By so doing, Mr. Seba is able to focus his attention on what can be learnt, what needs to be learnt and how it can be learnt rather what children with disabilities in his class cannot learn.

Vignettes 5 and 6 show how teachers Miss Miriam and Mr. Seba reflect on how teachers' knowledge and understanding of how children with a disability should be taught in regular classrooms is reflected in their classroom practices. In Vignette 5, we see how Miss Miriam applies her flexibility to all her students and does not limit it to some students. However, while she does this, like Miss Hulda she also reflects the notion that students will have to take the lead and catch up with what is happening when necessary. More importantly is Miss Miriam's assumption that the student with a disability in her class needs to be provided with separate instructions and that the student's learning is side by side with the others, instead of having it all together in a manner that she extends what she is doing to be able to meet the needs of the student with a disability.

The same understanding is reflected in Mr. Seba's teaching approach in which he focuses on providing support with the teaching aid to the student with a visual impairment instead of using the aid in the class in such a way that the learning of all is enhanced. In this case, despite Mr. Seba's strong convictions about the ability of all students to learn and achieve regardless of a disability and that the presence of a child with a disability does not mean that the learning of others is being held back, his underlying understanding that diverse learning needs means to be provided with something different prevents him from developing a practice that brings all those in the

classroom together just as learners. Thus Mr. Seba (which also applies to Miss Miriam) is yet to develop an understanding of the principle of extending what is ordinarily available to all learners in the classroom community without marking some out as being different. Reading through *vignette 5 and vignette 6*, it becomes apparent that the understanding and prevalent knowledge concentrates on providing a different learning experience for the child with the disability because of their learning need. This knowledge and understanding is enacted in these case teachers' classroom practices.

From the examples provided in this section, there is a reflection of how teachers' beliefs and knowledge are reflected in their classroom practices. More importantly, is how case teachers' understanding of how they are to meet the learning needs of the child with a disability influences the actions that they take in their classrooms. Here case teachers have taken a 'just do it' approach to inclusive practice. Even though some of them have come to believe in the need and place for inclusive practice, their practice was still being influenced by the knowledge of inclusive practice that they have and how they understand learning is to take place.

This finding is similar to that reported by Jordan and Stanovich (2003) in their earlier study on how teachers' beliefs on knowledge and how knowledge is learned influenced their classroom practice. They reported that the relationship between these elements of teachers' practice is reflected in instructional interactions, as well as predicts instructional practices in classrooms for children with or without disabilities. This Jordan and Stanovich (2003) add, is also significantly influenced by the prevailing beliefs about teachers' roles and responsibilities towards their students, especially students with disabilities. I have discussed how case teachers' understanding of their roles influences their actions in the classroom while giving examples of the principles of inclusive practice in section 6.2.

The above draws attention to the pivotal role of knowledge in the development of inclusive classroom practice. While teachers' beliefs, actions and knowledge interrelate and develop with practice (Rouse, 2007, 2008). In the context of this study, I believe that

unless teachers have fundamental and basic knowledge of what to do and how their actions reflect certain values in practice, they can continue to develop practices in ways that are not particularly or entirely inclusive and effective for all children. It is in this context of extended and clarified knowledge that effective teaching can be implemented in such a manner that it is continuously inclusive of all children at the level of classroom interaction.

7.2.3 Relating beliefs, knowledge and actions

In this section as a whole, I have drawn from examples of classroom practice to illustrate how teachers' beliefs and knowledge influence the nature of the actions that they take in classrooms in their effort to meet the learning needs of all the students in their classrooms. Through this process of analysis, it became apparent that although all these teachers are in classrooms where they have to teach at least one child with different learning needs because of a disability, the differences in the nature of the actions taken by them depended on their personal understanding which is situated in their knowledge of how things should be and their beliefs or perception of how the student with a disability ought to be taught.

From the examples provided, it is apparent that the knowledge case teachers have with regards to inclusive classroom practice and their espoused beliefs about learning, their roles in the students' learning experiences, how learning can be made effective and about the place of the child with disabilities in their classrooms were reflected in how they managed their classroom practices. This finding is also a reflection of Jordan et al.'s (2010) argument that teachers' beliefs influence their overall classroom practices. It also reinforces Rouse's (2007, 2008) argument. However, in this instance, I will also argue that knowing the context of these teachers' practice, their knowledge was also pivotal and underlined a lot of the actions that were manifested in their classroom practices.

7.3 Opportunities and barriers in case teachers' developing inclusive classroom practices

In presenting the framework for participation as a methodological tool Black-Hawkins (2014) assert that for research findings to be meaningful in developing and moving practice forward, there was a need to pay attention to the *why* question that underpins the framework. This she adds is on the basis that responding to the *why* question led to a better revelation and understanding of what practices are being engaged with and who is engaging with such practices. In discussing the nature of practice in previous sections, I have addressed these *who* and *what* questions of the framework for participation. These questions are who participates and who does not participate? Who decides who participates in classroom activities? What are the classroom practices that promote participation? What are the classroom practices that reinforce barriers to the participation and achievement of all learners? In this section, I address the *why* questions of the framework for participation.

I reflect on why practices which either promote or are barriers to participation are taking place. In so doing I draw on the values and beliefs reflected in the entire data set. In addressing these questions, I point out the barriers and possibilities that emerged from the process of data analysis. Some of the issues that have been raised in the examples are already provided in the *vignettes*, while others will be reflected in further examples presented here in this section.

7.3.1 Barriers

1. *Absence of a sense of shared values*

One of the barriers to participation is that in some instances the principles held by teachers were not necessarily shared by all the students. It became evident in instances (such as the one reflected in *Vignette 3*) that although teachers endeavoured to enhance the participation of all students, they sometimes have their efforts undermined by other students in the classroom. Even though across all the interviews and observations in the data set based on interviews and observation it appeared that there was a good level of acceptance and support between students in the classroom community, there were a few

instances where I observed students undermining their teachers' effort to be inclusive during classroom interactions. The teachers in these instances while I was observing did not necessarily address these issues but assumed that the students ought to understand or would eventually get to the point where they realise that they are all different and must be accepted as part of the classroom community.

These attitudes from other students with no identified disability, as far as I saw were left unaddressed by teachers. This meant that in those instances the student with a disability was discouraged from engaging fully with the classroom learning activities. I observed such a scenario in four classes. Two of these instances were in Mr. Noah's class. In discussing this in his interview his response to the situation is reflected in the interview extract below.

"The problem is that, you know that in most of these things you know their ability is not the same ehh, they will have individual differences. You will discover that those of them that know, they will not want to give others that do not ehhe the chance to respond to the questions... So you have to forcefully make them answer so that they know they are part of the class. They will assume that they are not part of the class, so one has to make them know that they are part of the class....Yes, yes, it is a big issue because of the others that are better than them. That is why I said individual difference. The others that are better than them would prefer that. They will think ahan uncle, why are you calling this person? Call us now, we know. Why are you calling those ones that don't know? So it is a little bit of a problem. Why are you calling those ones that don't know? we we feel that we know we are raising up our hands, but you are calling those that don't know. Ehen, so that they too will know that they are part of the class.... On their own they will know now. They know that this one is good, this one is not, as you are teaching them, they will be watching that this one answered a question, this one answered a question. So if you ask them that they should tell you. Because they know themselves, they themselves, they know this one is better than me". (Mr. Noah, Gowon High School)

From the above extract Mr. Noah understands that there are diverse learning needs in the classroom and he is making an effort to enhance the participation of everyone regardless of this. He reflects on how other students undermine the diversity and the differences in their learning process and the preferences of all the members of the classroom community. While he knows his reasons and the basis upon which he takes certain

actions - such as asking particular students questions and insisting that they respond by waiting for them patiently. These ideas and principles are not shared with the other members of the class community which leaves a gap for assumptions and attitudes shown by other students towards those who are vulnerable while teaching and learning is going on.

I observed such a scenario in two instances in Mr. Noah's classes and also in Mr. Jetur's class. While Mr. Noah's approach to addressing the situation is by remaining firm and not dismissing the student despite their delayed response, I think such a scenario can be avoided if values are made clear and shared with the students instead of assuming that they will be able to interpret the actions and understand how to respond to the needs of the other students in their classrooms. Sharing such values can be a starting point for the progress that can be achieved in terms of attitudes and practice. In her research, Linklater (2010) revealed how taking on the principle of everybody and sharing the values and principles underpinning her teaching practices with her students enabled the students to become more inclusive and respondent to the needs of their peers. Such an approach to developing inclusive practices can be a means of addressing indifference about the needs of other students in the classroom.

In the instance of Mr. Absalom's class, the somewhat competitive nature of the school context and specific factors made a difference and contributed to how the students responded to each other in classroom activities. Referring back to *vignette 3*, Mr. Absalom addressed the students when they complained about acknowledging the contribution of another student (who had a disability) on the basis that the teacher had not introduced such a concept to them before. The underlying factor in this class community is the rivalry and competition amongst students. This was an insight I gained from other teachers within the school context who complained about this tendency in their students. Also peculiar to Awolowo School's practice is the required continuous process of ascertaining achievement for students. This often meant that teachers are mandated to score class exercises and these all contributed to the official achievement record of students at the end of a term. Although this had the advantage of allowing

students' progress be a sum of their progress over a period of time, it also has the repercussion of making students develop a sense of competition between themselves even in ordinary classroom activities. Some of the teachers in their interviews discuss how they think some of the students try to distract others so they cannot make progress. This I believe also accounted for why less peer support was observed at Awolowo School, compared to the other schools.

The above is an outcome of the negative effects of focusing on achievement and measuring learning in specific and fixed ways. For students, it means that there will be a focus on achievement or learning as a personal good and that acquiring as much as possible for individual benefit is more important than the participator aspect of learning (Sfard, 1998). Such a narrow focus on learning does have its long-term negative consequences on the learning of children as they progress in life (Claxton, 2007) and can influence teachers' response in practices especially when they have diverse needs to address in classrooms because of the restriction it places on them (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007; Dyson & Millward, 2000).

2. Understanding the behaviour/response of students with disabilities

Similar to the above, it also emerged that students with disabilities sometimes reject support provided by their peers (either voluntarily provided or even when it is initiated by the teacher). I observed two instances where a student with disabilities declined an offer from a peer to be supported. In one instance the student, who has a visual impairment, was trying to find something in their locker. The peer offered to help search but this offer was declined. In the other instance, the student was heading to the front of the class and someone had placed an obstacle in the way. Another observant student realised that he was going to walk into the obstacle and went ahead to lead the student away but this offer was also declined. Both of these instances were in a class at Awolowo School. While I cannot be absolutely sure why this support was declined by the student, I have inferred on the basis of my interview with the class teacher. In my interview with her she discussed some of the strategies that she uses with the students in her class. Part of what she does is reflected in the quote below:

...so what I will do now is this, I will then have an instructor and a pupil. I will attach them and say you teach this one and you know if there is no motivation attached to it they won't do anything. You know students now. So I will now say, if you are able to help your pupil, as in if there is improvement, by the time they are given CE or given an assignment and the person is able to perform better than before, I will give you two marks in your own assignment. But if your pupil, there is no improvement, I will take two marks from your own and give them to the pupil. They will say oh, I will do it, I will do it, I will teach. They will be so happy ...because in in this school 1 mark counts for a lot, just 1 mark. Not in their exams, you know that the assignment does not really carry a lot of marks. That is why I use assignments and CE's. The one for CA's and exams, I don't touch it. I don't use that one because if you give somebody five marks in CA, eh no, no, no. It will place that person higher than their colleagues. But if it's 5 marks by the time they convert it will be just 0.000 something but they will appreciate it and it has been working... (Class teacher at Awolowo School)

As reflected in the extract above, students are made to be supportive only because they think there is something in it for them and not because of their understanding of the existing differences and diversity within which everyone can be supported. This might have triggered the responses provided by the people with disabilities to support provided by their peers. Rewarding support provided to peers is not entirely a wrong gesture on the teacher's part. However, receiving a reward for being supportive should not be the only motivation for supporting each other within the classroom community. This could lead to a dependent relationship in which support is not based on a mutual respect and acceptance but only on the basis of providing support for the other who is in need (Deng, 2010). It can also be argued that this reaction from students with disabilities might be an outcome of the nature of the support that is often offered which they might deem as stigmatising or perhaps marking them out as dependent on other peers and not independent. This is a possible explanation for the above behaviour.

Apart from the above instance at Awolowo School, another case teacher and the school administrator interviewed at Gowon High School also raised similar issues.

"I discovered that some of them are nice, some are very arrogant because of their disability. As you see them they are very stubborn. They tell you I can do it on my own. So from there I tried to get close to them and I knew that you cannot joke much with

them because they are arrogant. That is just it. You talk to them and they give you nonsense. So to avoid nonsense from them, you talk to them, you play with them, you try to impact knowledge but you make sure that you do not cross your boundary. I studied them before I started teaching them. You know I told you, I said some of them are very, very arrogant.” Miss Adam

“Yes and sometimes, some of them are over confident. They feel, don’t sympathise with me, don’t pity me, I can do it myself... And it sometimes makes it difficult.” Mr. Gyang, Vice Principal at Gowon High School

This issue is not particular to children with a visual impairment as I did not find any literature that supports this perception with any grounding evidence in Nigeria. There was only an article that speculated about this. The article by Eniola (2007) does not locate this speculated behaviour in any literature. This is an area that can be explored more with regards to how students with disabilities or more precisely students with a visual impairment respond to support from their peers.

Regardless, there is a wider body of literature that explains such behaviour from people with disabilities. Perceived anger, arrogance or aggression from people with disabilities as explained by Allan (1999, 2008) and Jahoda, Willner, Pert, and MacMahon (2013) is in most instances a response to the barriers often encountered by them in the context within which they find themselves. This form of resistance Allan (2008) explains is usually an effort aimed at crossing the limits or boundaries that have been set for the child with a disability. The effort is aimed at resisting what makes them obvious and marked out as different from their peers. What is often misread as arrogance, she adds is an effort for the child with a disability to exercise control over themselves and others. While this provided the student with a sense of belonging without being the one who is different and also a sense of control, the negative implication as found by Allan (1999) in her study was that teachers became unsympathetic, less understanding, more firm and critical of such behaviours. This response from teachers is what is being reflected in the data extracts above. The problem with this is that the students’ behaviour is then interpreted by the teachers as a lack of acceptance of having a disability and a refusal to

accept support from others. The lack of understanding of the needs and desires between children with disabilities and their peers, as well as teachers means that some needs are left unattended to or that students are not provided with the support and understanding that they might require at various points of the learning endeavours.

3. Prevalent knowledge

The pre-existing attitudes and current understanding of the role of resource person in the school and education system was the third relevant aspect that served as a barrier to practices that can enhance the participation of all children in the classroom community. In some instances (i.e. with teachers in Awolowo School) the resource person as discussed in section 6.4 misguided case teachers and reinforced the idea that they are not able to effectively address the learning needs of children with disabilities.

In other instances, contact with ‘experts’ in the education of children with a disability reinforces the concepts and sometimes deters the teacher’s inclusive effort. An instance is Mr. Noah who being a mathematics teacher was enthusiastic to find a way forward in how he can enhance the participation of children with disabilities in his mathematics classes. This was reflected in both Mr. Noah’s interview and in the interview with the resource person. His contact with the resource person and subsequently the ministry of education expert, led to a completely exclusive outcome. Instead of resolving the issue, the education ‘expert’ recommends that the teacher should leave the students out of the mathematics class entirely. The school adhered to the advice and the teacher’s efforts to collaborate with resource room experts and other experts from other institutions were halted, which meant there was no participation for the children with disabilities in that particular class. This nature of understanding from experts reinforces and confirms teachers’ already existing concern about their inability to effectively meet the needs of the children with disabilities in the classroom. An instance is also reflected in the interview extract below:

“ehhh there has being no time that I have told a blind student that I cannot help. It is just the way it is you either accept it or you leave it. There was a time that I went to the

school for the blind... Before teaching genetics, I went there [to resource centre] I met the headmaster, I have this topic and I have a blind candidate, so how do I teach this topic? The headmaster was the one that gave me the idea, just teach it before you come to the, and have separate time with that very blind candidate. So that was what I did. He helped me with some diagrams” (Mr. David, Azikiwe School)

In the above example, it can be seen that Mr. David’s search for support on how to effectively teach his student alongside others leads to a situation where he is led into providing separate teaching instructions for the student with the visual impairment. The above is a reflection of the fact that the thinking about providing for children with disabilities separately still exists within the education system. The reason for this approach to addressing barriers to learning, Oswald (2007) explains, can still be attributed to the approach with which teachers were trained. Teachers and special educators currently in service are those who have received such training and are yet to develop problem solving skills. Such problem solving skills will enable them to focus their attention on how the barrier to learning can be addressed as against the problem being with the child (a medical model approach) because of a learning need (Finkelstein, 2004). A similar problem in working with other professionals towards effective problem solving is identified by Engelbrecht (2007) in her study. She states the principle of addressing barriers was not part of the training the teachers in her study had gone through; hence teachers adopted a more consultative system of collaboration which often led to students being referred to be provided for separately.

Thus far I have discussed the issues relating to why there are barriers to participation of all children in the classroom communities in the practices of case teachers in this research. I have already discussed other issues such as the understanding of teaching and roles or responsibilities in teaching learning in previous sections. I have also not delved deeply into issues such as the absence of resources and class size which was specific to teachers at Gowon High School because they do not directly relate to the values and beliefs of the class community and are in many ways outside the control and influence of the teacher. The focus of this research remains on the teachers’ practice and those issues

that relate directly to what they can influence and manage with regards to their current classroom situations. In the paragraphs that follow, I now turn to discuss the possibilities and opportunities that presented themselves as aspects of practice that could be explored and used to enhance the development of case teachers' classroom inclusive practices in ways that can further enhance the participation of all children within the classroom community.

7.3.2 Possibilities

1. Students' contribution to teachers' developing practice

One of the main concerns raised by researchers such as Altinyelken (2010); Sikoyo (2010); Abd-Kadir and Hardman (2007); Nguyen, Terlouw, and Pilot (2006) and O'Sullivan (2004) on the development of practices that fully engage students in the developing context is the cultural nature of adult-child relationships. The problem they identify is the predominant culture in which children questioning teachers about their actions or ideas is not generally acceptable because teachers are regarded as figures of authority and respect. Contrary to this general assumption, my data analysis revealed that students with disabilities appeared to have a subtle but yet effective influence on some of the decisions made with regards to their presence and access to these classrooms, as well as their learning in some instances. Students' voices, although not officially recognised as such, were reported to have influenced specific decisions with regards to appointing a specific teacher to stand in as a resource person at Azikiwe School. A similar instance was also reported at Awolowo School where the students with disabilities approached the school authority to forward some complains about the practices of some teachers. This led the school authority to address staff and remind them of the need to take into account the particular learning needs of the students in their classrooms. At Gowon High School, the government through the school authority proposed that the students be withdrawn and taken back to special schools. The students were reported to have protested this action and the proposed action was revised, hence their current presence at Gowon High School.

Four teachers (Miss Hulda, Mr. Jetur, Mrs. Adam and Mr. David) in their interviews mentioned consulting with the student with the disability and other classmates at some point to discuss how their learning needs are best met and they attribute some of their current confidence to this consultation. This often compensated for the training or information their schools failed to provide. One other case teacher, Mr. Lotan, was clear about how the active engagement and questioning of a specific student with a visual impairment supported his practice by reminding him of the need to be effective so that all the students can learn.

“...But sometimes, Jacob used to come here and he will call my attention to it. He will say Mr. Lotan do you know that we are in this class? He used to say that. In fact, when I was teaching him, he used to help me a lot, Jacob used to help me a lot. He used to help me a lot so that I will not forget that they are in the class. Because it is very hard for you to utter two or three statements, that Jacob will not respond and ask you to clarify what you are saying. You will know that he is there... Sometimes, do you know that sometimes I used to remember that Jacob is in the class and I will forget that Joseph is in that same class. Because he will not, Jacob is like this Chike, they will not say anything. You will have to call them before they will say anything...” Mr. Lotan

In the above quote Mr. Lotan reflects on how one of his students with a disability is actively engaged and contributes to his teaching practices. His understanding of students questioning his actions contradicts the predominant perspective in the literature cited above. In this case Mr. Lotan found the student's question about his actions helpful for the kind of actions that he took while in the class. He goes on to compare how involved the student is compared to other students who are less active. This sometimes allows him to slip into learning activities where he sometimes forgets to account for their particular needs. This is an important insight into seeing the interruption by students to teaching practices as an important aspect of practice as it is just about students' voices being heard with regards to wider school practices (Alexander, 2014). If some of these case teachers are acknowledging the need to consult with the student about their learning at

specific times, these opportunities provide a space where these can be incorporated into classroom teaching and learning in a constructive manner. In this process teachers and students can work together to develop an experience that will effectively be able to meet the educational needs of the children.

2. The place of previous experience and personal motivation

On the issues particular to the case teachers' context, two main issues emerged which were relevant to understanding the practices of the case teachers in this research. The first was the mind-set and motivation of case teachers towards their work; and the second was how previous exposures or encounters for teachers served as a reference point for them to do what they are currently doing.

Case teachers' mind-set and motivation was mostly centred on what they thought was their purpose was in doing what they do. Seven case teachers made references to their primary purpose of being a teacher. An example of such an instance is reflected in the interview extract from Mr. Jetur.

Well I think that ehh that one has to do with individual differences. And I think that it also has to with the question of if one has the calling or if one is just doing it. Now if for instance you do not have a job out there and you want to do this kind of job. It is none of your business, your target is to cover the scheme and what is required, whether the children are following or not. If one has that kind of attitude, you know the children will suffer including the physically challenged. But then I hope every teacher that has a calling or feels that ... So that kind of thing, except that I cannot be the spokesman for everybody. (Mr. Jetur)

This perception of how they perceived their work as teachers was sometimes reflected in some of their classroom practices. A similar finding was identified by Westbrook et al. (2013) in their review of studies on teachers' practices in developing countries. They state that teachers' thinking or attitudes, what they do in their classrooms and what they see as an outcome of their practice interact to determine teachers' classroom practices. I have explained how case teachers' understanding of learning influenced what they did in chapter six. However, this notion of personalising and taking actions in work on the

basis of a personal understanding of the role that they have to play is an aspect of teachers' mind-set that is important and can be utilised or drawn upon when preparing teachers for diversity in their classrooms, especially in the developing context where conditions might not be particularly conducive.

Previous exposures and encounters with people with disabilities was an aspect that influenced teachers' personal perspectives and their practice, especially in terms of acceptance and recognition of children with disabilities in their classrooms. Four of the case teachers made references to a course on their teacher education programme that provided inclusive practice or disability awareness. However, six case teachers linked their current response to having a child with a disability in their classrooms to an encounter in either classrooms or in a different context that had had an impact on their current experiences. Teachers' exposure or experience with people with disabilities has also been identified as important in teachers' response towards children with disabilities even while they were still on their teacher education courses (Forlin, Cedillo, Romero-Contreras, Fletcher, & Rodríguez Hernández, 2010; Forlin, Loreman, Sharma, & Earle, 2009; Nketsia & Saloviita, 2013). In their separate studies in different research contexts Nketsia and Saloviita (2013), Forlin et al. (2009) and Forlin et al. (2010) state that previous experiences of inclusive practices or involvement with people with disabilities had positive interactional effects with the teacher education courses to influence their responses to inclusive practice and sense of self-efficacy to also meet the learning needs of students with disabilities if they are included in their classrooms. For these six case teachers, their previous encounters or experiences were definitely a reference point for what they currently did in their classrooms. There was an exception to this trend with one of the case teachers, Miss Hulda. Although she has had experience of encountering a person with a disability she did not connect this experience to her teaching practices.

These two points which are part of the personal experiences of teachers were also pivotal in enabling my understanding of teachers' practices and responses. Alongside Davis and Sumara (1999) argument that teachers' practices must be seen as a whole complex structure with its various interrelated components, adding these personal

dimensions of what informs teachers' practices into the eventual structure coding framework that I used (i.e. Appendix L) made the case teachers' practice contextual and situated in specific situations. Doing this, Flyvbjerg (2001) argues is how learning from a particular research context can be enhanced.

In this chapter I have discussed how case teachers' knowledge, beliefs and actions interrelate. I have also reflected on some of the factors that serve as barriers and the opportunities that presented themselves in case teachers' developing practices. In the next chapter, chapter eight, I summarise all these research findings and draw a conclusion.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Introduction

This thesis is concluded in this chapter. In section 8.2 I summarise the main crux of this research and then draw out a conclusion. This conclusion is then discussed in light of the literature discussed in chapter three. After doing this I proceed to state the contributions this research has made, as well as the limitations embedded in this research work in sections 8.3 and 8.4 respectively. The limitations in this research are linked and discussed alongside suggestions made for further research. I have also provided a brief reflection of my own learning experience as the researcher within this section. Section 8.5 presents the recommendations that I have made on the basis of the findings that have emerged and the conclusion drawn. This chapter concludes in this section with a brief reflection on the role of this research within the context of the development of inclusive education.

8.2 Summary and conclusion

This research focused on developing an understanding of how teachers with experience of inclusive education are developing practice in Nigerian classrooms. The above research focus informed the main research question: how are teachers with experience of inclusive education developing their practice in Nigerian classrooms? The premise within which this thesis is situated is that inclusive practice is about what people do (Florian, 2009), and more importantly how they do it (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011). This conceptual basis was developed based on how the understanding of inclusive education and its implementation in practice has evolved through research evidence over time since its formal declaration in the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994).

The research question was addressed through the use of the framework for participation developed by Black-Hawkins (2014) as a methodological tool that guided and upon which the process of data generation and data analysis was anchored. The entire process of using the framework was anchored on the understanding that inclusive practice is a continuous process through which teachers continuously engage with what they do, how they do it and why they do what they do (Black-Hawkins, 2014). Twelve teachers participated in this study and their practices were examined on the basis of their theoretical ideas on inclusive classroom practice. Through the process of this research, I was able to develop an understanding of the nature of the practices being implemented by these case teachers.

Focusing on the process of teachers' classroom practice became necessary after a review of the literature in Nigeria revealed the absence of this type of research. In the broader body of literature, there was also a continuing recognition of how several factors contributed to and interrelated in teachers' inclusive practice. There was also a lack of research that drew on specifically stated principles to explain inclusive classroom practice. Additionally, my intended long-term objective of working closely with teachers as a teacher educator further influenced my decision on the focus of this research.

Examples of these practices were drawn from observed classes and interview extracts were presented in order to explain the findings that emerged. Evidence of practice was discussed on the basis of how case teachers had developed and applied the principles of inclusive classroom practice. Principles that were yet to be developed or are still being misunderstood in their application by case teachers and support staff, especially problem solving and working with other support staff were also discussed. Other relevant issues that informed and influenced these case teachers' practices such as teachers' knowledge and absence of a sense of values held by teachers and being shared by all students were discussed.

The findings revealed that case teachers' practices were influenced by the role they had taken in the class, the role they assumed their students should take in their learning

experience and how they understand the process of teaching and learning. Teachers' beliefs about the ability of their students to progress and achieve in their learning endeavours were largely positive and teachers reflected a sense of being flexible in determining the progress of their students. This however was also to a certain extent dependent on the assumption that the child still has a role to play in enriching the learning experiences s/he has. With regards to case teachers' classroom practices, most of their actions were similar and comparable to findings from other research on inclusive classroom practice reported by Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011); Florian and Spratt (2013) and to findings on effective classroom practices in the developing context as reported by Westbrook et al. (2013). However, there was to a significant extent a reflection of the role of the student, especially for the students with disabilities in taking initiatives that can enable them to make the most of their learning experiences in regular classrooms.

This underpinning assumption held by case teachers is not entirely surprising following certain aspects of the cultural context within which they work. These cultural aspects are that all individuals to certain extents are inherently different and are allowed the opportunity to do what is expected of them at certain stages of their learning and development in life. The ability of the individual is then judged on the basis of the effort they are able to make and to contribute to the activity at hand (Ingstad, 2001).

Moreover, it can also be explained as a reflection of the cultural expectation of learning processes in such a developing context. This notion of learning is captured well in the Ashanti saying quoted below from Rattray, 1958 as cited in O'Sullivan (2004; p595):

“Wo ba saw asa-bone a, se no se, “wo a saw nye fe”, na nse no se “okra tet gu mu”’. (When your child dances badly, tell him, saying, “Your dancing is not good” and do not say to him “(little) soul, just dance as you want to”).

This is reflected in how case teachers had the expectation that the student needed to take the lead and responsibility in enhancing their learning experiences. This system of learning is culturally dependent on a process that allowed children to be active observers

at first and then progress to guided participation in tasks and activities. This is then expected to progress through interactions that involve the provision of directions and explanations necessary for learning. Such practice is still prevalent within the informal education sector developing context (Alexander, 1996; Croft, 2002; Kisanji, 1998; Rogoff, 1990). This process of learning demands that children are given the role of observers and are then expected to become part of the process as it progresses and as they (i.e. the children) become more confident in what they are doing (Kisanji, 1998).

This approach to learning has its benefits in how it enables learners to learn new skills in activities that allow them to take the initiative in learning (Rogoff et al., 2003). Regardless, the continuing implication of this assumption is the tendency to remain complacent about the barriers that hinder the effective participation of a child. Learning needs can often be left unexplored and the problem of learning experienced by a child is thus not addressed. The implication of such an assumption is that there is still the risk of the problem of learning being placed on the child as against exploring how the classroom environment, wider school context and structure can serve as barriers because of how they interrelate with the individual child's particular learning needs (Oswald, 2007). Thus there is a need to have a balance between allowing the child to take the lead and also exploring the barriers that could be preventing the child from being an active participant in any given learning activity.

Closely associated with this is also the tension and misunderstanding associated with the support provided by the resource person. A collaborative effort between teachers and support personnel towards addressing learning problems was the least developed aspect in case teachers' practice. In instances where there was an effort by teachers to gain information that can help their practice, this sometimes led to more exclusive practice following the advice provided by the 'expert' consulted. The problem of collaboration here reflects the continuing presence of practices that are based on the understanding that the problem of learning is within the child. This can be seen as an outcome of the nature of the training received by most teachers. In most instances, there is little or no focus on problem solving strategies in teacher education courses in developing countries

(Oswald, 2007), of which Nigeria is not an exception. This finding differs from the one reported by Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011); Spratt and Florian (2013) who in their studies reported how teachers had developed ways of working together with support staff in order to enhance the learning and participation of students with disabilities in their classrooms.

Collaboration is how people work together and not what they do (Friend & Cook, 2014). In this research finding there was more of a reflection of what teachers did as against how they worked together. The emphasis of collaboration or working with others is on developing new ways of working with others and that both parties voluntarily engage with each other in making decisions that will enable them to solve problems for the purpose of reaching a particular goal (Friend & Cook, 2014). There were instances of less voluntary engagement with each other with the research participants. There is therefore a need for a more conducive atmosphere associated with working with others so as to create the necessary environment for creative thinking and energy for more action (Conoley & Conoley, 2010).

The above findings addressed the first sub-research question on the type of practice that the case teachers were engaging with. The type of practice is that in which some of the principles of inclusive classroom practice are reflected. Regardless, there are still underpinning assumptions that hinder the effective implementation and development of practices that are inclusive of all children with disabilities.

The second sub-research question focused on how the elements of 'believing, knowing and doing' are interacting with each other in case teachers' classroom practices. Case teachers' knowledge, beliefs and actions were seen to interrelate in their practices. More important to teachers' practices was their understanding which they had based on their current knowledge of how difference is to be responded to in classrooms. Examples of how some case teachers' practices were developed on the basis that the child with a disability needed something specific and sometimes different because of their learning needs were presented. This also pointed to the need for the development of more

knowledge on practice so that teachers do not continue to single out students because of a disability, thereby making them appear different from the others. Teachers' beliefs were also seen to have played a significant role in what they saw as the outcome of their actions. Even though the participating teachers have at least two of the elements of doing, believing and knowing (Rouse, 2007), they are yet to achieve the full development of all the elements of inclusive practice. The implication of this is that there were instances in which the knowledge and beliefs defined the actual action in ways that were less inclusive of all the children in the classroom. These were the main findings that have been reported in this thesis.

Following the above findings, the conclusion that I have drawn to address the main research question is that *teachers with experience of inclusive education are developing practice based on their current knowledge and understanding of the roles they think members of the classroom community are expected to take; the knowledge that they have of what they think they are expected to do; and the impact they think their actions have in regular classrooms, especially where there is a child with a disability. While these ideas sometimes positively influence case teachers' practices by enabling them to provide learning opportunities for all children in classroom learning (i.e. reflecting the principles of inclusive classroom practice), there are still certain aspects that need to be more specifically addressed if practice is to progress and be improved upon in Nigerian classrooms.*

In discussing the role of the teacher as the more experienced adult in the learning experiences of children, Alexander (2014) maintains that more often than not teachers have a great influence on children's learning than they realise and actually utilise. This influence, he adds needs to be enhanced through continuous development of knowledge in order to increase teachers' confidence in supporting their students' learning. The realisation of the role teachers can play to facilitate and enhance learning in classrooms as argued by Westbrook et al. (2013) is fundamental to the nature of the practice that they implement regardless of the situations within which they practice.

Additionally, the above conclusion is a reflection of how teaching in itself cannot be understood in terms of just the actions and activities that take place in classrooms, but can be made sense of when an account of the discourses (i.e. the ideas, knowledge, skills and judgments) that precede, accompany and succeed those acts of teaching are also understood (Alexander, 2001, 2004). Drawing from his research evidence on the country context, Alexander (2001) noted that an exploration of classroom teaching practices needs to look beyond the task being engaged with in classrooms. It is this that brings to light how teaching actually takes place and the ideas that sustain practices.

There was a reflection of how the activities, interactions and judgements taking place interconnected and were used by teachers to relate to the different domains of teaching. These domains included their understanding of:

- Children: their characteristics, development and up bringing;
- Learning: how it can be motivated, achieved, identified, assessed and built upon;
- Teaching: its planning, execution and evaluation;
- Curriculum: the various ways of knowing, understanding, doing, creating, investigating and making sense (Alexander, 2004).

It was these factors that determined how the participating teachers' practices moved from being an effective teaching practice to an inclusive classroom practice. The difference between these two practices was reflected in how the strategy used by the participating teachers created opportunities for learning.

In explaining inclusive classroom practice, Florian (2007) and Black-Hawkins and Florian (2012) state that the difference in classroom inclusive practice lies primarily in how a particular strategy is used to extend an effective teaching practice so that it becomes inclusive of children with disabilities whose learning needs might vary from those of the other members of the classroom community. It is in teachers' ability to use particular teaching strategies in such a way that they avoid responding to individual learning needs in a manner that distinguishes or stigmatises the child with a disability as

being different from others that makes a process of teaching and learning inclusive in its nature (Florian, 2010; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011).

The above distinction between effective teaching practices and inclusive classroom practice is what enhances the ability of learners to inevitably participate as part of their immediate community, and they are then able to move towards full engagement in the practices of the community (Lave & Wenger, 1999). The purpose of allowing access to regular classrooms for children with disabilities is to enable them to become part of the classroom community through the above process.

Moreover, teachers' understanding of learning and how learning can take place for all children underpins their instructional practice (Jordan et al., 2009; Jordan & Stanovich, 2003). A learning process that enhances inclusive classroom practice is that in which there is a growing involvement of both the teacher and the students, with the teacher bringing in his/her experience, knowledge and expert position to enhance the learning process and development of the children in the classroom (Hargreaves, 2004). It is this that provides the context in which the right social and academic outcomes can be ascertained (Rix et al., 2006). This is a reflection of the process involved within the development of practice.

The conclusion drawn reflects how inclusive practice is a process that is continuously being developed through a combination and reflection of its various elements. Examining the various elements of these teachers' practices reflected the argument that inclusive practice is a continuous process in which barriers to participation need to be identified with the aim of improving the practice being developed and implemented (Black-Hawkins, 2014; Booth et al., 2002). Taking into account what is being done and how it is done has revealed the manner in which practices can enhance students' participation or inhibit their ability to be part of the classroom activities as members of the classroom community. The process of negotiating this is ongoing and involves an everyday, as well as moment to moment decisions made by all members of the classroom community (Benjamin et al., 2003). Discerning how these factors and

elements of practice interrelate and influence each other provides an insight into the learning experiences of those children who are exposed to these practices (Rouse, 2008). This is what then becomes the process of the continuous identification and removal of barriers to learning for all children regardless of a disability (Booth et al., 2002; UNESCO, 2005).

8.3 Contribution to knowledge

This research has contributed to the literature on inclusive classroom practice in three different ways. Firstly, to the literature on inclusive practice in Nigeria, this research has provided more detailed insight into teachers' daily classroom practices. In so doing it has provided examples of what practice is and the daily challenges that teachers encounter in their work in classrooms. These challenges and actions are insights that can support and explain some of the outcomes of previous research where they have reported a lack of readiness and/or the rejection of the idea of inclusive practice in schools and classrooms. More importantly, this research has provided examples that have pointed out specific areas that need to be addressed in terms of in-service teachers, as well as in the development of subsequent teachers.

An example of this is the reflection of the absence of a problem solving strategy in schools between teachers and support staff and how teachers' practices can be improved if they have the appropriate knowledge that can influence their practice in positive ways. I believe the specific examples provided have given a context within which stakeholders in the field of education and/or teacher education can draw from and apply to their own context of practice or training. However, first it is important to add that this research took place over a specific and limited period of time; and second that the case teachers included were not selected on the basis of their typicality of Nigerian teachers but because of the opportunity that they presented for learning to take place through this research work.

Secondly, this research has also contributed to the wider literature on the development of inclusive practice in developing countries. In using the alternative approach to

understanding inclusive practice situated in the work of Black-Hawkins (2014); Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011), it has extended the applicability of this methodological approach to understanding inclusive practice in a developed country context within which this approach has been based and used to understand teachers' practices.

In using the framework for participation and drawing from the principles of inclusive classroom practice, I have been able to demonstrate that these ideas extend and are also applicable to practices being developed by teachers in a developing country context. I have also reported how the principles of inclusive classroom practice were evident and not evident in teachers' practices. I have reported those practices that did not meet these stated principles, explaining why these practices were not evident. Doing this provided useful insights into understanding teachers' practices and has enabled a process that has identified specific aspects of practice that need further development.

Evident in the research reports within similar body of work, is a focus on only those aspects or examples of teachers' practices that have met the principles of inclusive classroom practice. Examples of this is in the work by Spratt and Florian (2013); Florian and Spratt (2013); Black-Hawkins and Florian (2012). What is not explicitly stated in this research literature is whether those practices that did not meet the expected principles set were useful in enhancing the researchers' understanding of teachers' practice. Also, was it entirely separable from those aspects of practice in which the participants were able to meet the standards of the principles of inclusive classroom practice? Even though these researchers acknowledged the co-existence of both good and bad practices (in terms of those that met the principles of inclusive classroom practice), they only reported those instances of good practices because that was the focus of their research. They did not provide a detailed reflection of how these practices can co-exist and why teachers' sometimes have these practices that do not meet the standard of the principles of inclusive classroom practice. This could have enabled the identification of specific aspects of practice that teachers need to develop further in their classroom practice.

Using the framework for participation presented by Black-Hawkins (2014) as a methodological tool, this research has also demonstrated how useful the framework for participation can be in understanding teachers' inclusive classroom practices. As I have already explained in section 5.2, I found the framework useful in guiding this research's process. It also served one of its purposes as stated by Black-Hawkins (2014), that it is a tool that can be used to identify those aspects of inclusive classroom practice that need further development.

The process of using this methodological tool led to the collapse of two sections into a single category. As an outcome of the process of data analysis, I merged the participation and achievement section with the participation and collaboration section of the framework. This has already been explained in chapter five. Regardless, this outcome has challenged the current structure of the framework as presented by Black-Hawkins (2014). The question worth pondering and possibly researching further is if the framework needs to be structured with these two aspects of practice separated or should they really be seen as inextricably linked to each other because of the understanding that assessment in inclusive classrooms should be part of the learning process and ongoing alongside the process of ensuring that all are learning together.

This outcome could have also been a reflection of a contextual issue following the reported flexibility in determining progress reflected in case teachers' practices or a reflection of the cultural context in which children are expected to take a lead role in their learning experiences. The pressure on who takes responsibility for the learning outcomes shifts the emphasis from teachers taking the responsibility for achievement compared to the UK context where the framework for participation was developed and used. The expectations from teachers appear different in this regard.

The teachers in this research context are yet to take full responsibility for the learning experience of all the children in their classroom. This can also be argued as a necessary shift that can enable teachers to begin to move away from blaming the development of inclusive practice, teaching and learning entirely on factors such as resources and time

constraints. Taking more responsibility means a shift towards actually identifying the problem of learning as being a result of the interaction between the individual child or children with disabilities and their particular characteristics with the learning environment which then hinders their learning progress. This shift is what teachers who have developed effective classroom practices as reported by Westbrook et al. (2013) in their review of teaching practices in developing countries have used.

In general, by using the framework for participation in this research to understand teachers' classroom practices, this research has started to address the problem of research in the field of inclusive education as identified Göransson and Nilholm (2014). They identified a lack of clarity by researchers because most researchers do not explicitly state the standard with which they examine inclusive practices. They thus call for a need for researchers to clearly stated principle and framework that they have used to understand practice. This is an approach to understanding practice that is currently being encouraged in researching inclusive classroom practice (Florian, 2014b; Spratt & Florian, 2014).

The third and final contribution this research has made to the literature on inclusive classroom practice applies to the wider literature on inclusive classroom practice, some of which I discussed in section 3.3 of this thesis. The findings that have emerged here have in many ways reasserted some of what is already reflected in the existing body of literature, further re-establishing the grounded nature of this body of knowledge. Some differences and exceptions that are situated in the context of this research have also provided new insights and drawn attention to how the implementation of inclusive practice can be influenced by specific situations. Explanations of these exceptions have broadened the knowledge base on how teachers' practices can be understood by subsequent researchers in the field of inclusive classroom practice.

8.4 Limitations

In identifying the contributions made by this research work, I am not oblivious to its limits. One of which is not involving the students with disabilities or other students

directly in this research. I made this decision firstly because of the reason I began the journey which has led to this research. Secondly, is the research aim which was focused on teachers' experiences of inclusive practice and thirdly is the time constraint within which I had to carry out and complete this research work. I am however still interested and I hope to be able to carry out research into how students' voices can be included in teachers' practices in ways that do not undermine the predominant adult centred culture of society. It will be interesting to explore what implications there will be for the development of inclusive classroom practices in a developing context. It will be worth exploring the experiences of students with disabilities in regular schools in Nigeria and comparing them with the experiences of other students in a different or similar context to Nigeria.

Another limit to this work is the time limits within which I carried out the research. This research mainly presents snapshots of case teachers' practices based on how much time I spent with them. There is a possibility of developing a broader understanding of teachers' practices in the wider context of their schools through a longitudinal, ethnographic or action research study in which these teachers' practices are closely examined, actions are proposed, implemented and then re-examined for the purpose of identifying specific and observable outcomes. Dyson (2014) has identified that this is a lagging area of research which is needed at this stage of development in the field of inclusive practice.

An obvious limitation to this research is the fact that the types of disability included in the classrooms observed were limited. There were more instances of children with a visual impairment as the only identified disability. This has placed some boundaries on the applicability of the examples. Nevertheless, I think there are lessons that other teachers can draw from these examples and they can reflect on their practice in terms of ways they can be more inclusive of all children notwithstanding the nature of disability they come across.

In the course of sampling the participating teachers, I stated that I had visited a number of schools. Even though these schools did not meet the set sampling criteria in this research, my interaction with the head of the 'inclusive education units' was insightful. Most of them had the understanding that they were not really implementing inclusive education in its fullest sense. They were always quick to explain that to me. Following the theoretical and methodological approach that I had taken, I did not follow up this line of inquiry. This in itself is a limitation to carrying out a research study with a predetermined set of ideas directing the research focus. I am aware that this presented a possible line of inquiry in which an action research study can develop ways in which these units and the teachers heading them can transform the knowledge that they have into action. This can be monitored over a period of time to see how their knowledge and actions can lead to beliefs and thus a development of the elements of inclusive practice. This line of inquiry can enhance the development of practice if it is followed through.

Regardless of the limitations of this research, engaging with this Doctoral study over a period of three years has allowed me to learn as a researcher, as a teacher and as an individual. As a researcher, the skills learnt and developed over this period of time have made me more aware of the possibilities and promising role research has in development both in the field of Education and in other spheres of life. Research skills such as persistence; repeating and reviewing processes; redefining and explaining even the smallest decisions because of their possible implications; managing varied types of information and communicating or reporting my research work in ways that are meaningful to others at different levels are all part of the skills that I have developed.

As a teacher, I have had the opportunity to be at the other side of the table and have had the chance to reflect on some of my previous practices. In doing this I have sometimes found my previous actions wanting and have come to realise that I need to be reflective and learn to transfer what I know into action regardless of the level at which I am teaching. As an individual, I recently realised how my knowledge of inclusive classroom practice is influencing how I interact with and plan other activities with others in other

areas of my life. Being in a position of deciding how to meet the varied dietary requirements of a group of students, I could not help but think about how I could make the food edible for everyone, while still meeting the specific requirements of those with certain preferences. It was not difficult for me to trace why I felt uneasy about providing something different for some people because of their particular needs even though everyone seems to do that.

The aim of this study was to examine teachers' actions with a purpose of understanding why they take those actions in the classroom and what ideas, assumptions and understanding informs their classroom teaching and learning activities. The focus was on teachers as individuals functioning in the classroom and the steps that they take to address the learning needs of the children they have in their classrooms, especially with regards to having a child or children with disabilities in their classroom. This study was aimed at providing a broad base of understanding on teachers' inclusive classroom practice in Nigerian classrooms. There are other aspects of understanding teachers' classroom practice that were not addressed in this study. I am aware of all these possibilities and do intend to explore these issues in future research that will build on the understanding developed in this thesis.

Some of these aspects of teachers' practice that I have considered for future research include having an in-depth ethnographic study of fewer case teachers. This will provide a study that really examines teachers' thinking and engages with the teachers over a period of time with repeated interviews and reflections. Doing this will provide the opportunity for a more collaborative or action research that can enable a closer work with teachers towards enabling them to develop their classroom inclusive practice. Another possible research direction that I will be developing from this research is an exploration of how teachers develop their practice in view of how they account for the school wide factors within the school where their practice is situated. This study will focus on teachers as individuals developing their practice in the context of school policies, school culture and school practice (either formal or informal). This study will possibly be extended to account for the broader cultural, historical, political and social

context of the educational system where the teachers are located In a different light, there is a possible development of a study that examines the differences between teachers practice and how they can be understood in light of the difference between teachers in developed and developing countries. The current debates about the different issues of focus in these contexts are a possible area of future research that I am considering.

8.5 Recommendations

Based on these research findings, I hereby make the following recommendations:

1. The findings in this research have indicated those places where opportunities for developing practice exist. Teachers in these situations can be supported in ways that enable them to be more reflective and seek to address some of those aspects of practice that serve as barriers to their learners. One of the ways I think this can be addressed is by providing a forum or context within which teachers already teaching in Nigerian classrooms can reflect on how their knowledge and assumptions about teaching and learning influence how they respond to the learning difficulties experienced by their students, especially if the student has a disability.
2. One of the most problematic aspects of participating teachers' developing practice is the ability to work with the resource person in a way that supports and enhances the learning experience for children experiencing difficulties because of a learning need arising from having a disability. This can be addressed by developing a better understanding of the different, but yet important role of all involved, as well as focusing on finding ways in which all efforts can complement each other for the benefit of the child involved. This effort can be aimed at the deliberate focusing of actions towards focusing on the problem and barriers in learning. One of the possible ways of doing this is to have a system in which consultative services for in-service teachers are provided on a continuous basis. This will reflect how the process of developing practice is continuous and engages with all. Such a process has the

possibility of being extended through networks that can also support new teachers as they train and develop their own classroom practices.

These are some areas that I think can serve as a starting point for the development that can support further development in teachers' classroom inclusive practice.

In this chapter, I have summarised, concluded and pointed out the specific contributions this research work has made. I have also reflected on some of the limitations and the personal learning that I have experienced over the course of this Doctoral research. Through these I have made some recommendations for possible ways forward. In conclusion, this research has provided an opportunity for learning. It has also added to developments in the field of inclusive classroom practice by providing further examples and new insights, thereby adding to the existing literature on inclusive education.

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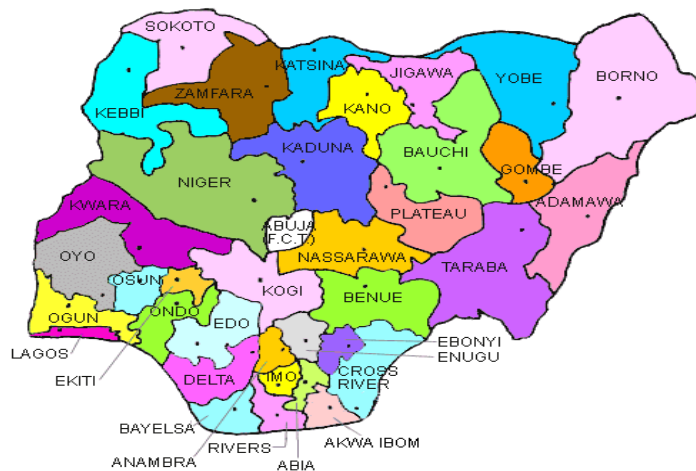
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APPENDIX A

MAP OF NIGERIA INDICATING LOCATION AND GEOGRAPHY (all images from google images)



APPENDIX B

SUMMARY OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

List of government documents included in review of publications on inclusive education in Nigeria

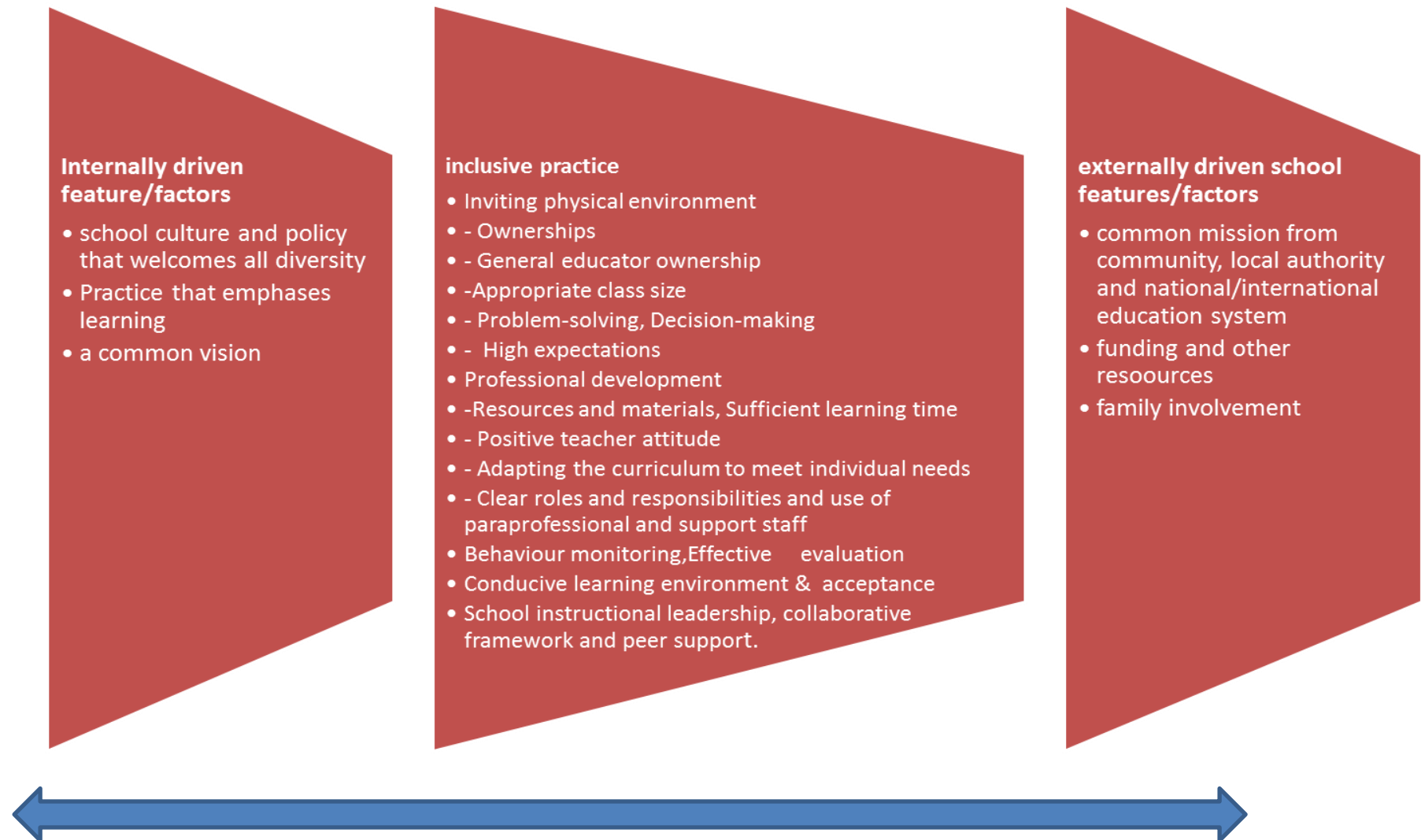
S/NO.	Name of Document	Year of publication	Author (Publisher)
1.	The Compulsory, Free, Universal Education Act	2004	Federal Ministry of Education
2.	UBE Digest	2004	Universal Basic Education Commission
3.	Standard Action Plan: Education for All is a responsibility for All	2004	Ministry of education: Universal Basic Education Commission
4.	Nigeria Sector Diagnosis a condensed version: A framework for re-engineering the education sector	2005	Federal Ministry of Education (Education Sector Analysis Unit)
5.	Universal Basic Education Commission	2006	Federal Ministry of Education
6.	Implementation plan for special needs education strategy	2006	Federal Ministry of Education
7.	Vision 2020: the role of the Nigerian education Sector: what we need to know	2007	Federal Ministry of Education
8.	The development of Education National Report of Nigeria	2008	Federal Ministry of Education

S/NO.	Name of Document	Year of publication	Author (Publisher)
9.	The development of education: National report of Nigeria (presented by the Federal Ministry of Education Report presented at the 48th International Conference on Education (ICE), Switzerland). Conference Theme: Inclusive Education: the way of the future.	2008	Federal Ministry of Education
10.	Roadmap for the Nigerian Education Sector	2009	Federal Ministry of Education
11.	Report of the Vision 2020 National Technical Working Group on education Sector	2009	Nigerian National Planning Commission
12.	4 – Year Strategic Plan for the Development of the Education Sector: 2011 – 2012. 2012 Implementation Report	2012	Federal Ministry of Education

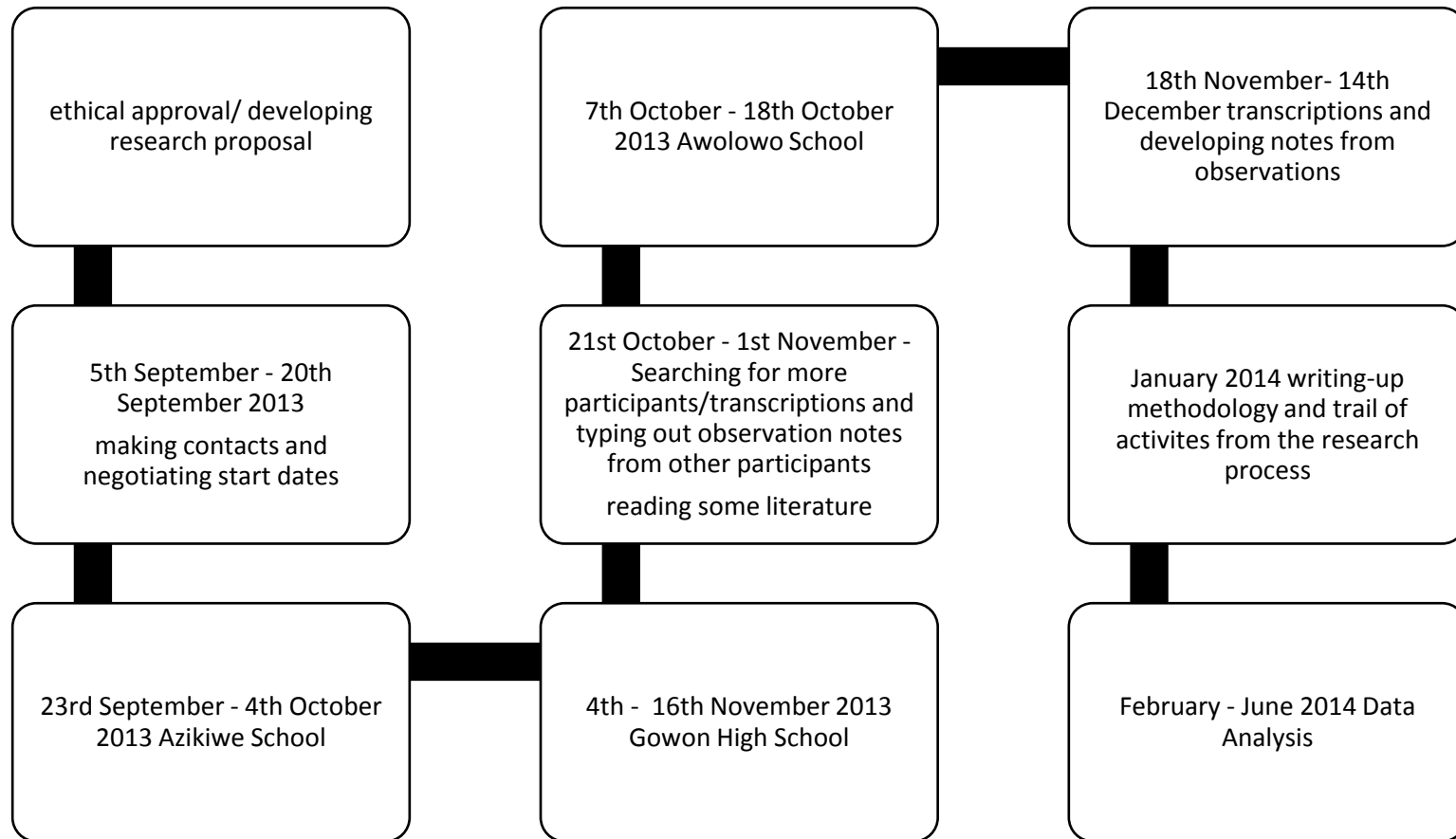
APPENDIX C

Figure reflecting summary of some of these elements of inclusive practice reflected in various publications

These are based on the work of Lipsky and Gartner (1997); Peters (2003); Stoll (1991, 1999)



APPENDIX D
TIMELINE OF RESEARCH PROCESS AND PARTICIPANTS INFORMATION
TIMELINE OF RESEARCH PROCESS (DATA COLLECTION PERIOD)



BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON PARTICIPATING TEACHERS

S/N	PSEUDONYM	SUBJECT	GENDER	YEARS OF TEACHING IN CURRENT SCHOOL
1.	Mrs. Adam	Social studies	Female	3
2.	Mr. Jetur	English	Male	7
3.	Mr. Noah	Mathematics	Male	6 ½
4.	Mr. Absalom	Mathematics	Male	2
5.	Mr. Lotan	Mathematics	Male	6
6.	Mr. Weng	Home Economics	Male	7
7.	Mrs. Nehemiah	Christian religious knowledge	Female	6
8.	Mr. Othniel	Creative Arts	Male	7
9.	Mr. Seba	Basic Technology	Male	½ a year
10.	Miss Miriam	Computer Science	Female	½ a year
11.	Mr. David	Agricultural Science	Male	17
12.	Miss Hulda	Business Studies	Female	5

APPENDIX E
INSTRUMENTS USED IN DATA GENERATION

OBSERVATION SHEET USED ALONGSIDE FRAMEWORK FOR PARTICIPATION

School:

Teacher:

Class:

Time:

Teaching	Observation notes	Comments
Task What are the children expected to learn? How are they expected to learn it? What are they trying to achieve?		
Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What type of knowledge is utilized in action? • What actions are taken to enhance the engagement of children especially the CWD? • How are they using the information available or knowledge from feedback to improve what they are doing? • How are others in the classroom worked with? • How are they involved in the learning activity? 		
Interactions What is the nature of interaction? Who is interacting with whom?		

How is the interaction carried out?		
Judgments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the belief about the education of all children including CWD? • What believe is held towards children's ability to learn? • Who is seen as capable of making a difference to the child's life and learning experience? • How are other resources such as specialist support utilized in planning activities? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What teaching strategies are used? • How are the children learning it? • Where to get help when necessary • Identifying and assessing difficulties • Assessing and monitoring children's learning • The school policy context 		
<i>OTHER NOTES: Physical setting (artifacts)</i>		
<i>Interactional setting and activities taking place, actions by class members</i>		
<i>Human setting (characteristics of all in class)</i>		
<i>Classroom setting</i>		

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE GUIDE

(QUESTIONS ASKED ALONGSIDE QUESTIONS FROM FRAMEWORK FOR PARTICIPATION)

Mr. Absalom

1. Why make students work on the board and insist that they discuss their ideas with others?
2. Why are you insisting that they all must write at the same time?
3. Do you feel the presence of students with disabilities drags the class behind?
4. What is the role of the resource person in the learning process?
5. Class spaces and movements?

Resource person

1. How do you think the teachers perceive your role as the resource person? Do they consult you or just allow you to take all the responsibility?
2. From your experience, do the teachers involve the students in activities (including extra-curricular activities)?
3. Do you sometimes experience barriers such as teachers thinking or assuming that a child cannot be a part of particular activities in the classroom and beyond?
4. How do you address or respond to the situation when students complain about teachers' practices to you?
5. Is there a challenge with regard to trying to make the student independent and responsible for their learning?
6. What is your role/responsibility as a resource person?

Vice principal (administrative staff)

1. Why inclusive practice as a school? Any school Policy? Exceptions?
2. Does the school have an expectation in terms of what the teachers' responsibility should be or ought to be in a class where there is a child with a disability?
3. Are teachers prepared or trained in any way when they are new in the school?
4. What is the role of the resource person from the school's perspective?
5. Do you have concerns over some children dragging the others backward? Or some holding back the progress for others?
6. Are the teachers happy to do their work or are there complains about some children holding back the others?
7. What is the school's expectation for the children in the school, especially those with disabilities?

PICTURES FOR INTERVIEW INTERACTION



APPENDIX F

The Principal,

School Name

REQUEST FOR ACCESS FOR RESEARCH PURPOSE

My name is Taiwo Mary Moyosore, I am a Nigerian, female, graduate student currently studying for my Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Edinburgh, Moray House School of Education, Scotland, United Kingdom.

I am conducting a research study entitled ‘Teachers’ Negotiations of Inclusive Practice in Nigerian Classrooms’. The purpose of the study is to explore how teachers are developing their classroom practices to include all learners, regardless of their disability. The aim of this research is to develop an understanding of how teachers are developing inclusive practice as they engage with the tension between the need to provide equal opportunities for all learners in classroom learning.

I understand that your school has a very good reputation for providing inclusive education. You run a programme that provides education to children who would otherwise be without education or educated in a separate setting because of a disability.

I am writing to request your consent to work with teachers in your school as cases for my research. The research will involve observing and interviewing the teachers involved, and interviewing the principal (or an administrative staff member). If possible, I would like to observe two or three teachers in their classrooms during the teaching and learning process. These observations will be non-participant and will not interrupt classroom activities in any way. I will also ensure that the interviews are scheduled to minimise interrupting school activities and each interview will last no longer than 60 minutes. I am planning to conduct the research between the last week of September and December, 2013. During this period, if possible, I intend to spend two weeks in your school with the participating teachers. Please see the attached proposal for the study and details of what the study will involve.

The results of the research study may be published after the completion of my degree in 2015, but neither your name, the name of your school, nor any member of your school will be identified. This is to avoid any unintended consequences. I am therefore guaranteeing confidentiality and anonymity if you agree to this. If there are any queries about the research, you can contact me or my supervisors through the contact details provided below and the postal address provided on the research proposal attached.

Thank you.

Yours Sincerely,

Name, contact details, supervisors name and contact details:

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Mary Moyosore Taiwo

Correspondence:

Research Outline

TOPIC: Teachers' Negotiations of Inclusive Practice in Nigerian Classrooms

AIM OF STUDY

The aim of the study is to develop an understanding of how teachers are developing inclusive practice as they engage with the tension between the need to provide equal opportunities for all learners in classroom learning and, at the same time, the need to achieve certain set standards and targeted outcomes as measured by examinations after a certain period of time.

RESEARCH QUESTION

How are teachers developing inclusive practice as they negotiate the tension between inclusion and achievement in Nigerian classrooms?

DATA COLLECTION

If possible, I intend to be at your school once for two weeks to observe and interview two or three of your teachers. This will involve:

Observation

- Observe classroom activities and take photographs of important moments.
- Observations will be non-participant.

Interviews

- Interviews will be conducted with the teachers involved and the principal (or an administrative staff member)

TIME FRAME: The entire study will be conducted between **the end of September and December, 2013 (with all of the schools involved). But I will only need to be in your school for about two weeks.**

NOTE:

- Confidentiality is assured and the data will be used **ONLY** for the purpose of this study.
- Photographs taken during observations are only for the purpose of enhancing the interviews that will follow.
- Interviews will be tape-recorded for record purposes and proper analysis.
- Transcribed interviews will be provided for cross-checking by each participant before the analysis.
- Need to know the procedure in obtaining permission to interact with children, if applicable or the need arises.

Teachers' negotiations of inclusive practice in Nigerian classrooms

how are teachers with the experience of inclusive practice developing their practice in Nigerian classrooms?

Who is doing the research?

My name is Taiwo Mary Moyosore, I am, a Nigerian, female, graduate student currently studying for my Doctoral Degree at the University of Edinburgh, Moray House School of Education, Scotland.

What is the research about?

I am conducting a research study entitled 'Teachers' negotiations of inclusive practice in Nigerian classrooms'. The purpose of the study is to explore how teachers are developing their classroom practices as they negotiate the need to include all children in the class in learning activities.

How long will the research last for?

The entire study will last for 10 weeks. The final findings will only be available after the completion of my degree .

If I choose to participate what will it involve?

To help in my research, I would like to observe you at work in your classroom during the teaching and learning process. The observation will be non-participant and I will not interrupt classroom activities. I will take photographs of moments in your teaching and learning activities that I will want to ask you questions about. I would also like to interview you after the observation to give you a chance to reflect on the classes. The follow-up interview will not last more than 60 minutes.



How often will I be observed and interviewed during the period of the research?

Mary is ready to negotiate this with you. It will however be beneficial to the research if she is able to spend at least half a day with you each week.

Are there any risks?

Confidentiality and anonymity is guaranteed as pseudonyms will be used and neither you nor your school will be named. The photographs will not be identified and will be used only for the purpose of the interview interactions. Additionally, you have a right to withdraw at any point in the research with or without a reason or you can refuse to discuss any issue as wished.

Do you have any concerns?

If you have any queries about the research, you can contact me or my supervisor through the contact details provided below.

If after reading this information letter I decide to participate what should I do?

You can sign the consent form attached to this information flyer to indicate your interest in participating in this study.

THANK YOU

If there are any queries about the research, you can contact me or either of my ²³² supervisors through the contact details provided on this flyer.

Please keep information flyer for your record



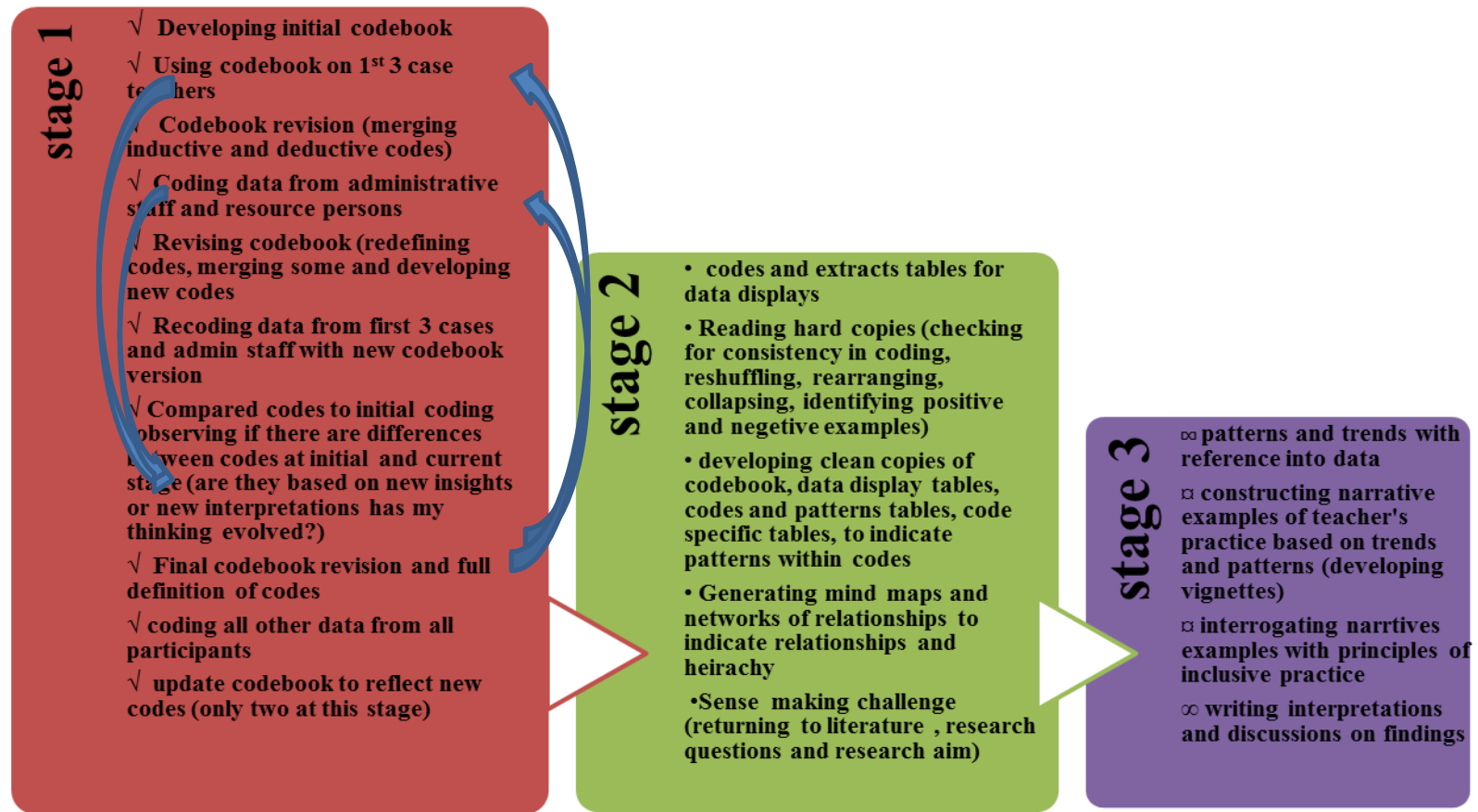
CONTACT DETAILS

Mary M. Taiwo:

Supervisors:

APPENDIX G

Diagram showing stages and process of data analysis



APPENDIX H

SECTION ONE

EXAMPLE OF CODE BOOK ENTRY

S/N	CODE BRIEF DEFINITION	CODE	LINKS TO WHICH MAJOR FRAME WORK QUESTION	FULL DEFINITION OF CODE /THEME/ CATEGORY	WHEN TO APPLY IT	WHEN NOT TO APPLY IT	EXAMPLE
13.	Reaction and attitude towards specific subjects	PC-RATSS	2.1	Students' attitudes to specific subjects and how teachers use such knowledge	Apply code when students' attitude or dislike to a specific subject is referred to and how teachers react to such attitudes	Don't apply this code to discussion on students' perceived responsibility in learning generally (See PC-SRLE below)	<i>...the problem with the maths generally is that the students have a dislike for it. So that generally may affect whatever, you try to do... (VP Azikiwe School)</i>
28.	Recognition and acceptance of students by students	PD-RASS	3.1	Students' interactions with each other during classroom activities and beyond (in includes the acceptance of other students by students with disabilities with regard to their support too)	Apply this code when there is a discussion on or an observed instance where students recognise and accept each other regardless of diversity in learning need	Don't apply this code when the discussion is on students supporting each other (See PC-CPUSS above or on the process through which students are groups to peers see PC-PGS above)	<i>They do, but they need further orientation because sometimes in the assembly ground, when they are leaving their class, they will just leave the special students. (VP Gowon High School) Or I think their relationship is cordial. We have not been having cases of maybe quarrelling or maybe fighting amongst them. And one thing I</i>

S/N	CODE BRIEF DEFINITION	CODE	LINKS TO WHICH MAJOR FRAME WORK QUESTION	FULL DEFINITION OF CODE /THEME/ CATEGORY	WHEN TO APPLY IT	WHEN NOT TO APPLY IT	EXAMPLE
							<i>want to say is that both the staff and the students, the regular students now, they are friendly.(Resource Person Gowon High School)</i>
26.	Support staff (i.e. Resource person) working with a range of students or individual students.	PC-SSWWS	2.1 or 2.2	Activities of support staff in classrooms and/or beyond. This covers discussing the role of the resource person with regard to the support they provide for students	Apply this code when the role and functions of a resource person (support staff) is discussed in relation to how they work with students	Don't apply this code if the focus is on resource person working with teachers (See PC- SSWWT below)	<i>So she is helpful to the students. If she is helpful to the teachers, things like this she should be able to help me interpret it (Mrs. Nehemiah)</i>

SECTION TWO

INDEX FOR USING THE FRAMEWORK FOR PARTICIPATION (Source: Black-Hawkins et al, 2007; p 149 - 152)

Box 10.8 Evidence to support the Framework for Participation (Key: D = Documentation O = Observations I = Interviews)

PARTICIPATION AND ACCESS: BEING THERE

- ***Joining the school***
 - Admissions policies and practices Admissions policy (D)
 - Practices and attitudes to admissions of a range of students (I)
 - Other local (competing) schools' admissions policy documents (D)
 - Information on which schools local students attend and why (I)
 - Local and national policies on student admissions (D)
- ***Staying in the school***
 - Exclusion policies and practices Exclusion policy: fixed term and permanent (D)
 - Exclusion figures over x years: fixed term and permanent (D)
 - Policy on internal exclusions (D)
 - Stories about exclusion practices, plus attitudes of staff and students (I + O)
 - Student attendance policies and practices Attendance policy (D)
 - Practices to support students' attendance, particularly those 'at risk' (I)
 - Stories behind students' truancy and attendance (I)
 - Policies on 'alternative curriculum' (on roll but out of school? full time/part time?) (D)
 - Stories behind 'on roll but out of school' (I)
- ***Access to spaces and places***
 - Physical accessibility policies and practices For students (D + O + I)
 - For staff (D + O + I)
 - For parents/carers and other visitors (D + O + I)
 - Attitudes towards increasing physical access for members of the school (I)
 - Creating and maintaining a welcoming and safe school
 - Induction policies and practices for new students (D + I)
 - Induction policies and practices for new staff (teaching/non-teaching) (D + I)
 - Anti-bullying policies (D)
 - Practices to help bullies and their victims (I)

- Stories of bullying (I)
- Welcoming and safe or frightening places: for whom, why and when? (O + I)
- Practices and attitudes about rules, rewards and sanctions (I + O)
- Open or out-of-bounds places: for whom, why and when? (O + I)
- Policies around rules, rewards and sanctions (D)
- Access to the curriculum
 - Timetabling policies and practices
 - The school's timetable and associated policies (D)
 - History and pragmatic reasons underpinning the timetable (I)
 - Practices: which groups of students do and do not do which subjects (I)
 - Practices: students' withdrawal from mainstream classes (O + I)
 - Practices affecting individual students' timetable and why (I)
 - Practices affecting individual teachers' timetable and why (I)
 - Policies: student withdrawal from mainstream classes (D)
 - Access to the wider curriculum
 - Policies: lunchtime and after school clubs/activities (D)
 - Practice: lunchtime and after school clubs/activities, including who does and does not attend and why (O + I)
 - Policies: outside school trips and visits (D)
 - Practices: outside school trips and visits, including who does and does not attend and why (O + I)

PARTICIPATION AND COLLABORATION: LEARNING TOGETHER

- Learning alongside other students
 - Policies and practices which determine which students do and do not learn alongside one another
 - Selection criteria used to arrange students into teaching groups – e.g. gender; age; attainment; (dis)ability – to reduce or increase diversity (D + I)
 - election criteria used to arrange students into pastoral groups – e.g. gender; age; attainment; (dis)ability – to reduce or increase diversity (D + I)
 - Teachers' and students' expectations about students' achievements (I)
 - To what extent lessons comprise learning tasks which are appropriate to the full range of students in the class (O + I)
- Supporting students to learn together
 - Classroom practices which encourage students to use each other as a resource for learning
 - Teachers draw on students' existing knowledge, experiences, expertise and interests (O)

- Teaching styles support collaborative learning: e.g. group work; peer teaching; older students working with younger ones (O)
- Support staff work with range of students, not just individuals (O + I)
- Members of staff working together
 - Teaching staff work together to support their classroom practices
 - Team teaching, observing peers, sharing materials, etc. (I + O + D)
 - Drawing on existing knowledge, experiences, expertise and interests of other teachers (I + O)
 - Teaching and support staff work together
 - Policies re in-class support: e.g. whole school and/or individual students (D)
 - Practices re in-class support: LSAs and teachers working together: planning lessons, preparing materials, working with some/all students, supporting behaviour, etc. (uses and abuses of LSAs) (O + I)
 - Practices of other support staff and teachers working together (language support, behaviour support, physiotherapy, etc.) (O + I + D)
 - Staff attendance at meetings (e.g. support staff included?) (D + O + I)
- Schools and other institutions working together
 - Collaborations across institutions: policies and practices: widening the range of resources available, both material and human
 - Other primary/secondary schools (D + I)
 - Primary–secondary school liaison (D + I)
 - Mainstream/specialist provision liaison (D + I)
 - Use of LA resources (D + I)
 - Other institutions? FE, HE? (D + I)

PARTICIPATION AND DIVERSITY: RECOGNITION AND ACCEPTANCE

Of the three key sections that comprise the Framework for Participation, the final one is, in some ways, the most problematic in terms of researching and understanding what is happening in a school. However, whilst its processes of participation and barriers to participation are not easy to reveal they cannot be ignored. They comprise the values and beliefs that help to underpin the cultures of a school. Because they are often covert and unquestioned by staff and students, they permeate all policies and practices, including those considered elsewhere in the Framework. In others ways these interconnections may, however, actually support the research, in that it may be possible to explore this key area of participation through the evidence gathered for the other two. Thus, any and all of the methods suggested elsewhere in the Framework (in terms of documentation (D), interviews (I) and observations (O)) will also be appropriate here.

- Recognition and acceptance of students, by staff
 - The attitudes of staff towards students as a body
 - Policies and practices that acknowledge, appreciate and celebrate the diversity of students and those in which differences are

- overlooked, misunderstood or treated with intolerance (gender, social class, ethnicity, academic attainment, classroom behaviours, (dis)ability, etc.) Recognition and acceptance of staff, by staff Attitudes of members of staff towards colleagues according to institutional structures, hierarchies and statuses (e.g. class teachers and LSAs, SMT and classroom teachers, etc.)
- Attitudes of members of staff towards colleagues who experience difficulties in classrooms; providing support and/or shame and blame
 - Policies and practices that acknowledge, appreciate and celebrate the diversity of staff and those in which differences are overlooked, misunderstood or treated with intolerance (gender, social class, ethnicity, academic attainment, classroom behaviours, (dis)ability, etc.)
 - Recognition and acceptance of students, by students
 - Attitudes of students towards other individual students and groups based on sameness and diversity (gender, social class, ethnicity, academic attainment, classroom behaviours, (dis)ability, etc.), including friendships and bullying.

APPENDIX I

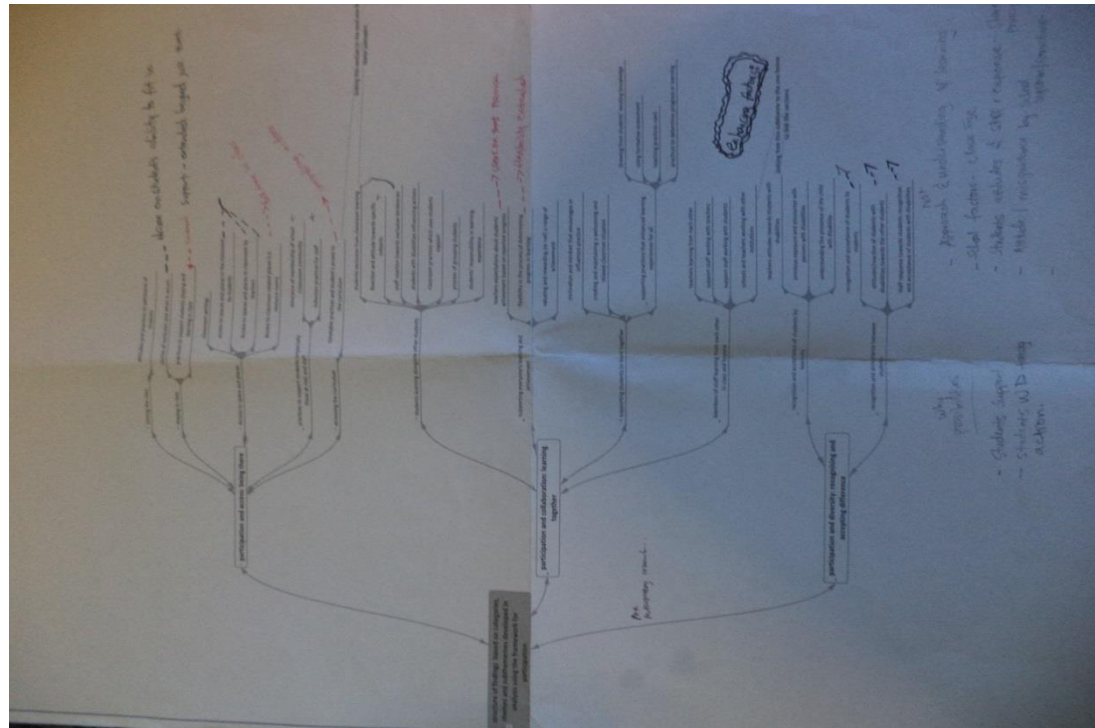
CODE AND EXTRACT TABLE EXAMPLE

S/N	CODIC BRIEF DEFINITION	CODE	Mr. Abukam B.Sc. (NGDE) 2 yrs current sch. Several previous yrs of exp. at other sch.	Mr. Lotan NCE, B.ED 4yrs current sch, 6yrs with two other schools	Mr. Othman (Degree, 7 years at school, few previous yrs with other sch. B.A)	Mrs. Nehemiah (7 years, NCE, Degree)	Mr. Wong (13 years at sch. Few with other schools prior B.A)	Miss Sarah (Resource Person) (B.Ed. and M.Ed.)	Miss Elam (V.P Accad) 8 years at school (12 years of teaching) etc	Relevant interactions with other teachers at school is Mrs. Ashtar, Mallam Ramo and Mr. Abraham (degree and NCE)
				class that day. He was crying in the class. The girl till today she will say, 'Mr. Lotan what you did that time, what you did that time' so we try to balance it. We try to balance it. In fact you have to be very careful so they do not tell you they are doing double of what they cannot do at all.	seat. If I discover that you are not participating, I will mark you zero. Another student still hanging around. Sir we are 26 so I do not have a group. Find a group and join. She joins a group making up six in that group. Teacher urges groups to settle early or lose some marks. Two groups earn a mark for settling in early.					In this school 3 mark counts a lot, just 1 mark. Not in (20,200) know that in the assignment is not really carry much marks but is why assignment and CE's the one for CA's and exams I don't touch it. I don't use that one because if you give somebody five marks in CA, eh no, no, no. It will place, that person higher than their colleagues. But if its 3 marks by the time they convert it will be just 0.000 something but they will appreciate it and it has been working. Mrs. Ashtar
17.	Students responsibility in learning experience	PC-SRLE	And by the Grace of God they are coping very well, they are coping. By the Grace of God they are coping. ... This Doris is not serious at all. Jesus Christ. That is what I am saying. Gang actually works in my class. Doris does nothing. When Gang will be busy doing something in the class, when I say, Doris, you are not writing? She will say, How do you expect me to write? Observation: 7 th and 14 th October, 2013	Gang would have even been better that what he is doing if he was serious. I was not told, Gang solved quadratic equation on his head. Quadratic. That time I was helping sister to dictate question, the only problem is that they need more time than the normal students to solve. For someone to solve quadratic equation in his head. Abbb		They are very good. Intelligent wise	Yes, they are, but to me, at a point I sensed that maybe, like Chike I sensed that maybe calling him too many times. He is a kind of sensing something else. It occurred at a point today that is the reason why sometimes he may not even respond. But if I'll, at a point if I say I cannot call him again, it means sometimes if he is not getting me but then he might not ask me a question.	A learner is a learner, even if that person is 100 years old and above, so far as he is seated before you, he is a learner, so it is not even their own duty because you have a goal you want to achieve. So if the child or the learner is not paying attention, it is your duty to call such a child. But maybe, the interest will be on the part of the child too. But you know different distractions and he will derail. So it is your duty to say, oh boy, are you really following us.	I noted that they were brilliant, the two of them and they were enthusiastic to learn. And I must say they were easy students to teach. It depends on the personality. Some of them don't feel they have to go there. While others feel yes, at least they hear what is going on... Oh yes, yes. As I said the reluctance is from them. So we try to encourage them. And you know, because the teachers also are sensitive, if they encourage them and	That is why I tell them if you come in and we are at number six, start at number six forget about one to five, if you are interested you can have the one to do it later (Mallam Hausa) There was improvement. But eventually, the boy was eventually withdrawn because he couldn't still cope. Now presently now I have another child who is still having problem. That one I didn't just waste time I met the VP. Look at what this boy is doing. I gave him test and look at what he got. And I was not the only one, I thought I was the only person other

COLOURED MARKED EXAMPLE PICTURE

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PICTURE OF MIND MAP AND NETWORK OF CODES



APPENDIX L

Outcome of data analysis (categories, themes and codes -i.e. the final the coding framework used-)

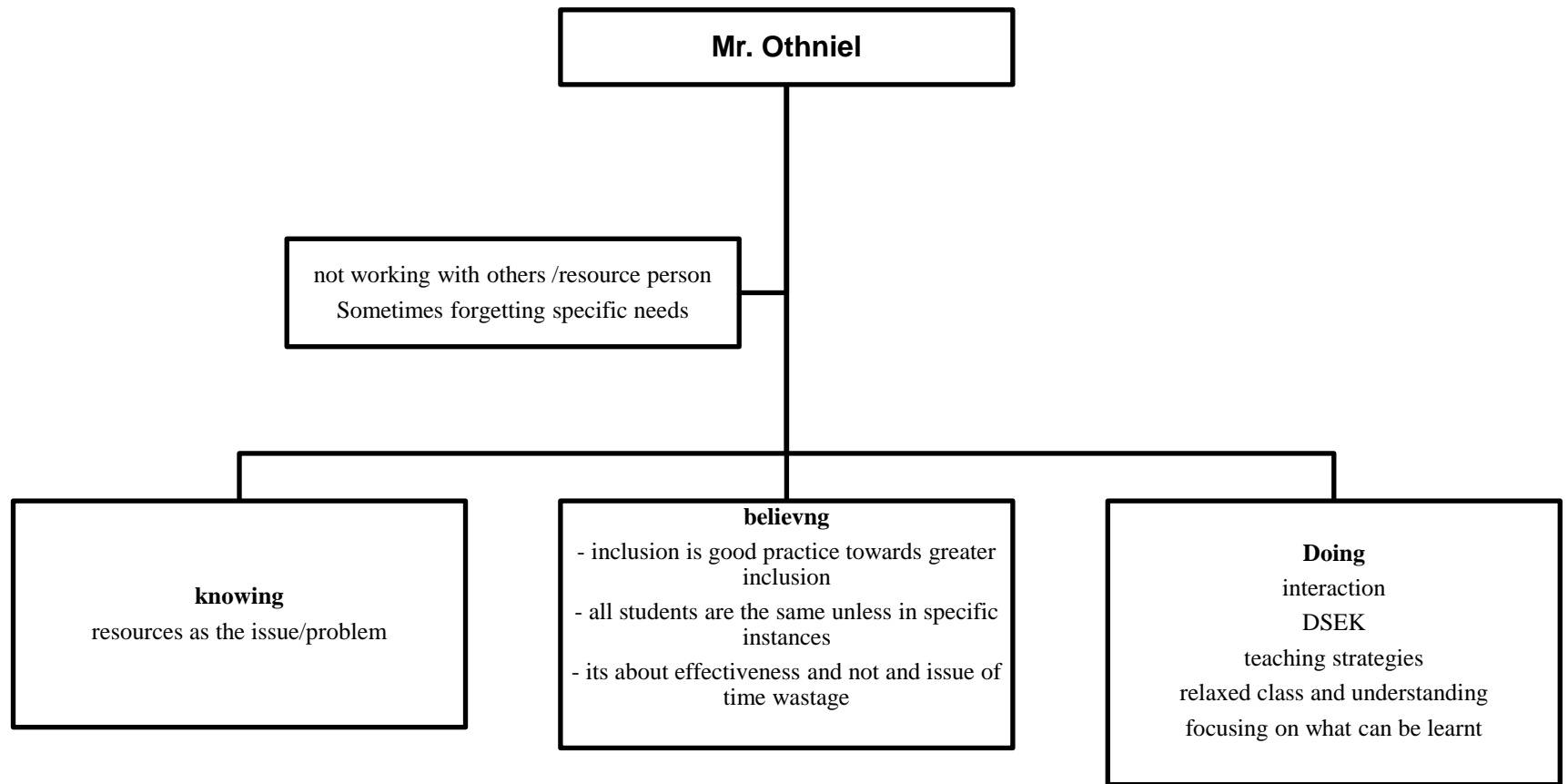
S/N	CODE BRIEF DEFINITION	CODE ABBREVIATED
	PARTICIPATION AND ACCESS: BEING THERE	PA- [category]
	<i>Joining the class</i>	<i>PA-JC [theme]</i>
1.	Attitudes and practices for admission of students	PA- APTAS
	<i>Staying in class</i>	<i>PA-SIC[theme]</i>
2.	Stories of exclusion and when it occurs (which includes instances of students not in class and why this occurs)	PA-SECC
3.	Practices to support students staying and learning in class (especially those who are seen to be at risk) (or not)	PA- PSSSC
	<i>Accessing spaces and places</i>	<i>PA- ASPC [theme]</i>
4.	Classroom setting	PA-CS
5.	Access to spaces and places in the classroom by teachers	PA-ASPCT
6.	Access to spaces and places in the classroom by students	PA-ASPCS
7.	Access to classroom related places (such as Resource room)	PA-ACRP
	<i>Practices to support students (especially those identified as been at risk) and staff</i>	<i>PA-PSSAS [theme]</i>
8.	Assurance of membership (for school administrators and in the classroom community for teachers)	PA-AMSC
9.	Induction practices for staff (or not)	PA-IPS
	<i>Accessing the curriculum</i>	<i>PA-AC [theme]</i>
10.	Timetabling practices and students' access to the curriculum (or not)	PA-TPSAC
	PARTICIPATION AND COLLABORATION: LEARNING TOGETHER	PC- [category]
	<i>Students learning alongside other students</i>	<i>PC-SLAOS [theme]</i>
11.	Students' exclusion from classroom learning activities	PA- SECLA
12.	Staff reaction towards exclusive tendencies in classrooms	PC-SRTET
13.	Reaction and attitude towards specific subjects	PC-RATSS
14.	Students with disabilities influencing specific actions, practice and participation	PC-SWDIA
15.	Classroom practices which uses students support (or not)	PC-CPUSS
16.	Process involved in grouping students in to peers or for support in classroom activities (either to reduce or increase diversity)	PC-PGS

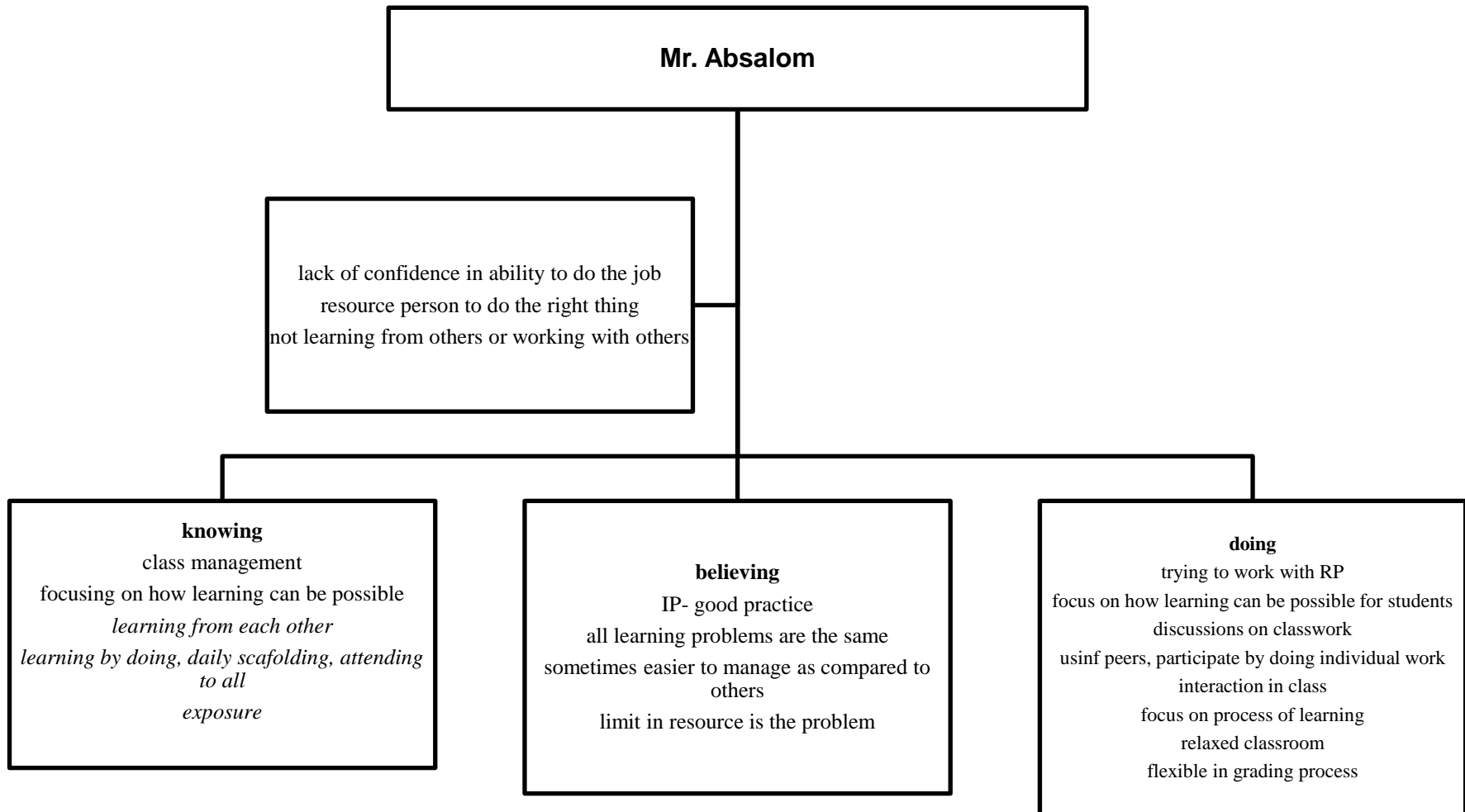
S/N	CODE BRIEF DEFINITION	CODE ABBREVIATED
17.	Students responsibility in learning experience (teachers' views)	PC- SRLE
	<i>Supporting everyone's learning (Regarding progress in learning as an everyday expectation)</i>	PC-SEL [theme]
18.	Teachers' expectations of students' achievement based on reported progress in learning process	PC-TESA
19.	Valuing and rewarding (or not) a range or varied forms of achievement	PC-VRNRA
20.	Flexibility in the process of determining progress in learning	PC-FPDP
	<i>Supporting students to learn together</i>	PC-SSLT [theme]
21.	Motivation and Mind-set that encourages practice or influences practice (positive or negative)	PC-MMEIP
22.	Creating and maintaining a welcoming and relaxed classroom situation (or not)	PC- CMWRCS
23.	Supporting practices that enhances learning experiences for all (for example, peer teaching/learning, group activities, use of teaching aids, using each other as resources) or not	PC-SPELEA
	<i>Members of Staff learning from each other in the classroom and school</i>	PC-MSLFE [theme]
24.	Teachers learning from each other (or not)	PC-TLFE
25.	Support Staff (Resource person) working with teachers or vice versa (or not)	PC- SSWWT
26.	Support staff (Resource person) working with a range of students or individual students.	PC-SSWWS
27.	Schools/ teachers/ administrative staff and other institutions working together: collaborations across institutions to widen range of resources (resource centres or persons or with parents)- (or not)	PC-SWWI
	PARTICIPATION AND DIVERSITY: RECOGNITION AND ACCEPTANCE	PD- [category]
	<i>Recognition and acceptance between students</i>	PD-RABS [theme]
28.	Recognition and acceptance of students by students (or not)	PD-RASS
29.	Attitudes/Reactions of students with disabilities towards other students (positive and negative)	PD-ARFSWD
30.	Staff response towards students' recognition and acceptance of children with disabilities in their classrooms (positive and negative)	PD-SRTSRA
	<i>Recognition and acceptance of students by teachers</i>	PD-RAST
31.	Teachers' attitudes towards children with disabilities in their classes (positive and negative) (this covers practices in which differences in students are overlooked, misunderstood or treated with intolerance (e.g. in meeting specific needs or allowing them to use their equipment)	PD-TATCWD
32.	Teachers' previous encounters or exposure	PD- PEEPWD
33.	Teachers' understanding the presence of a child with a disability (positive and negative)	PD-UPCWD

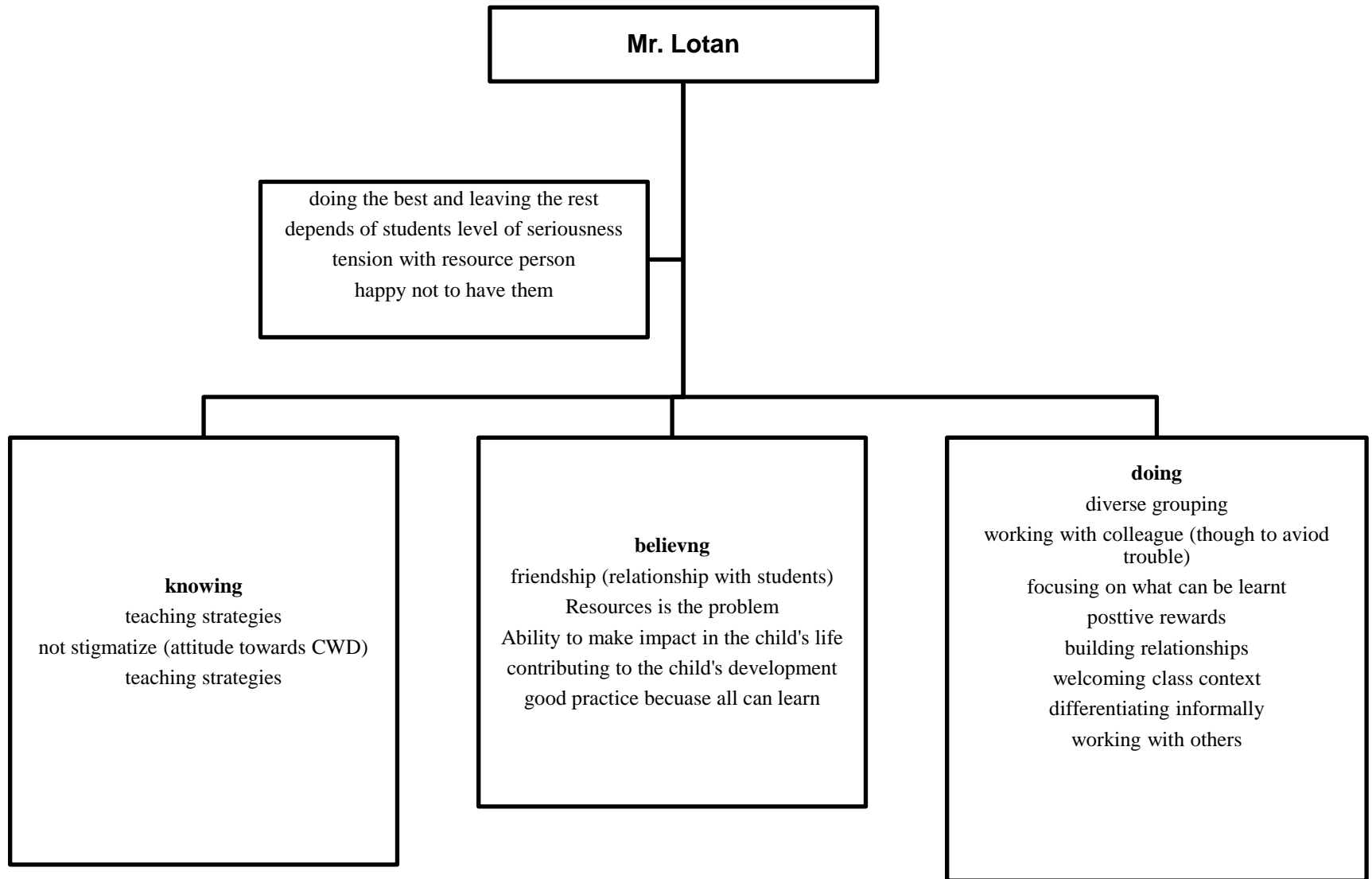
APPENDIX M

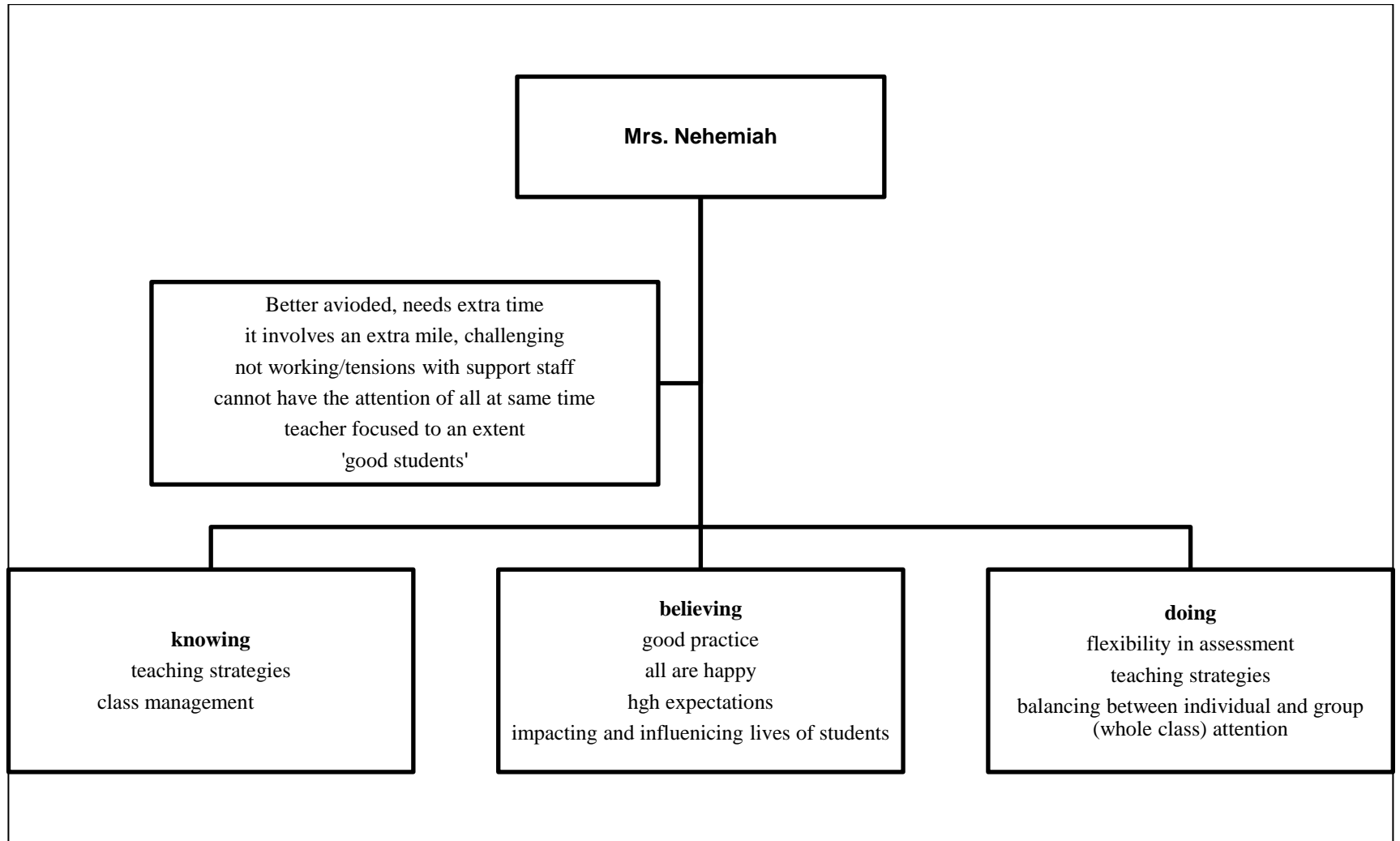
SECTION A

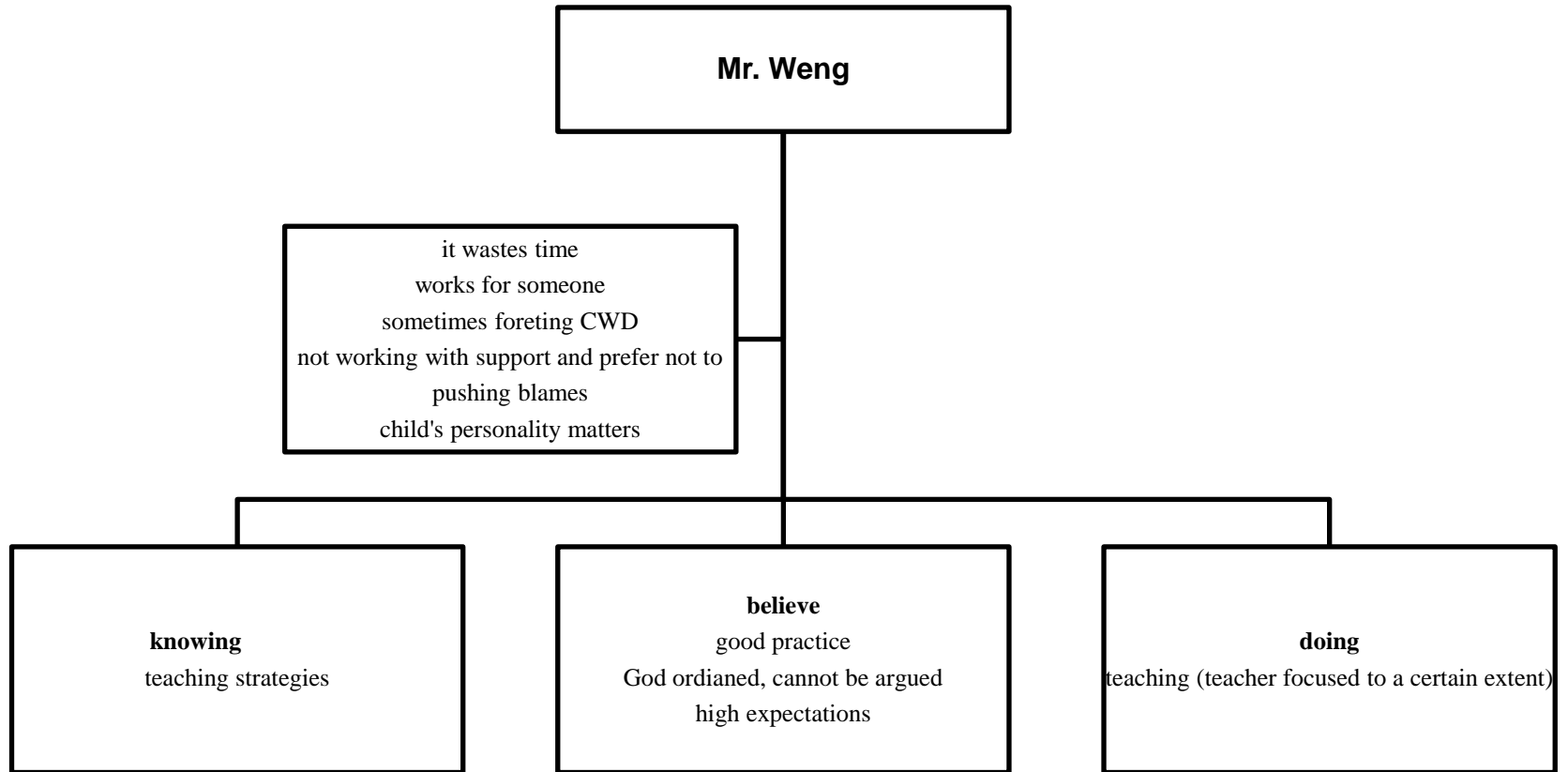
FLOW CHATS OF CASE TEACHERS' PRACTICE

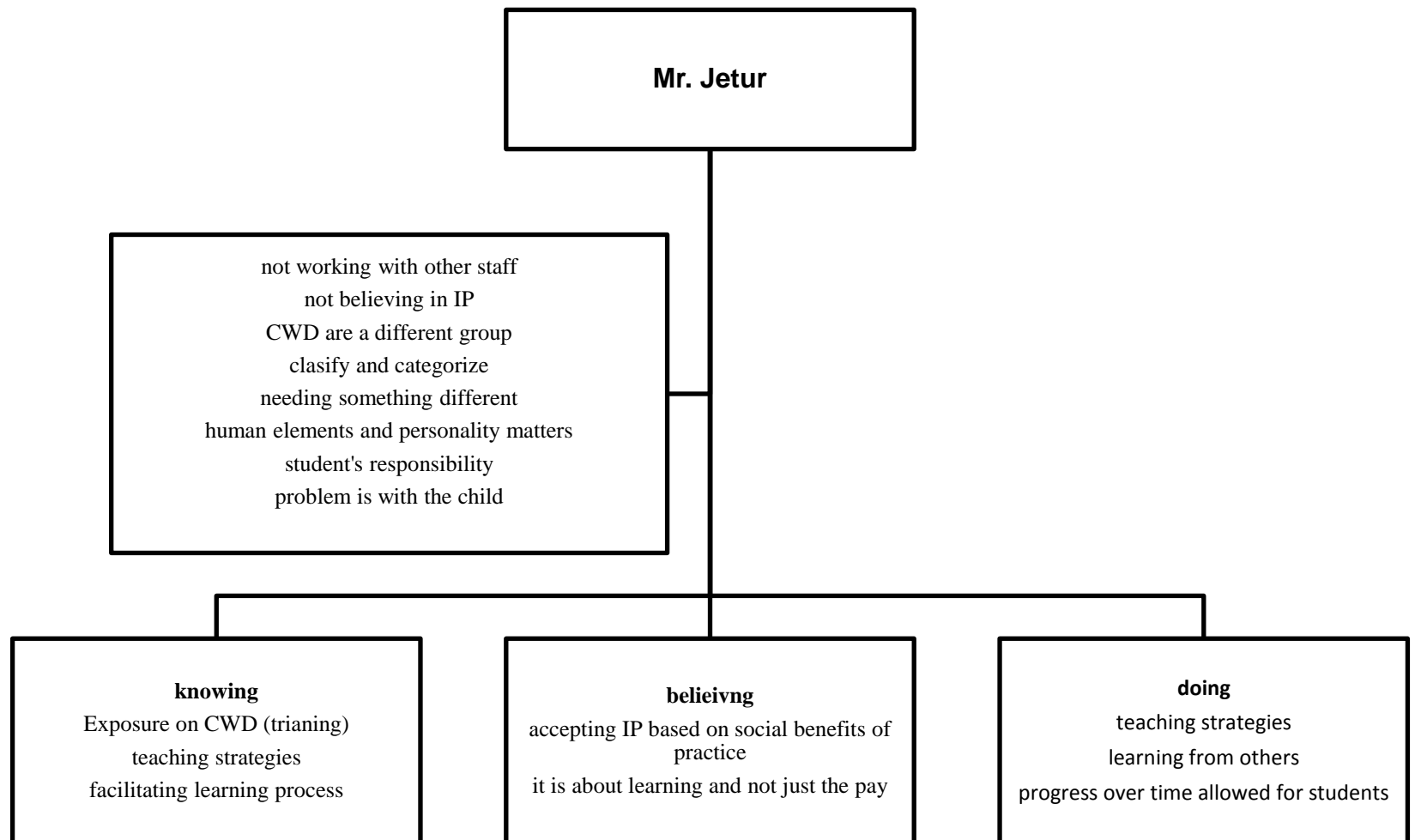


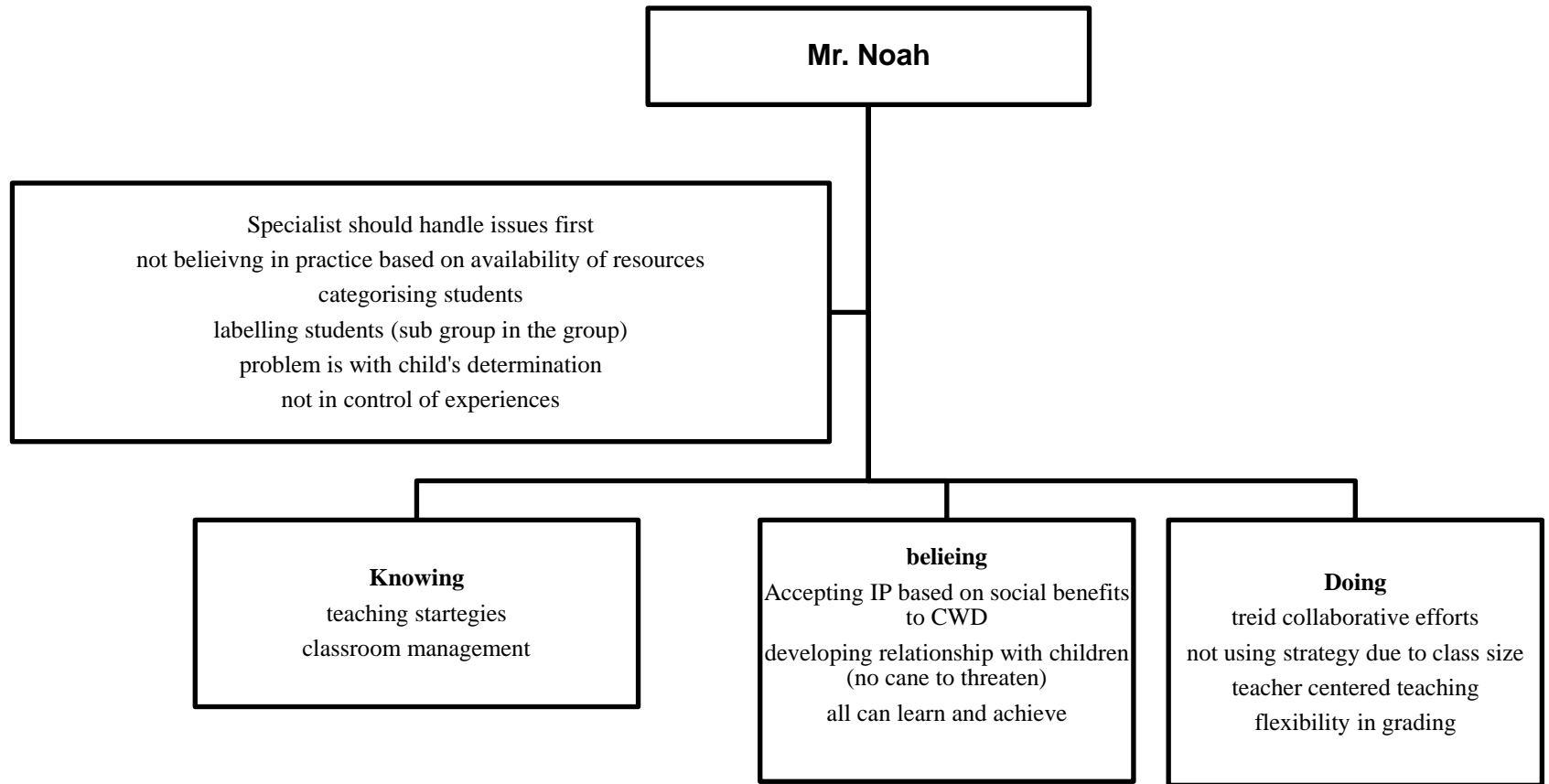


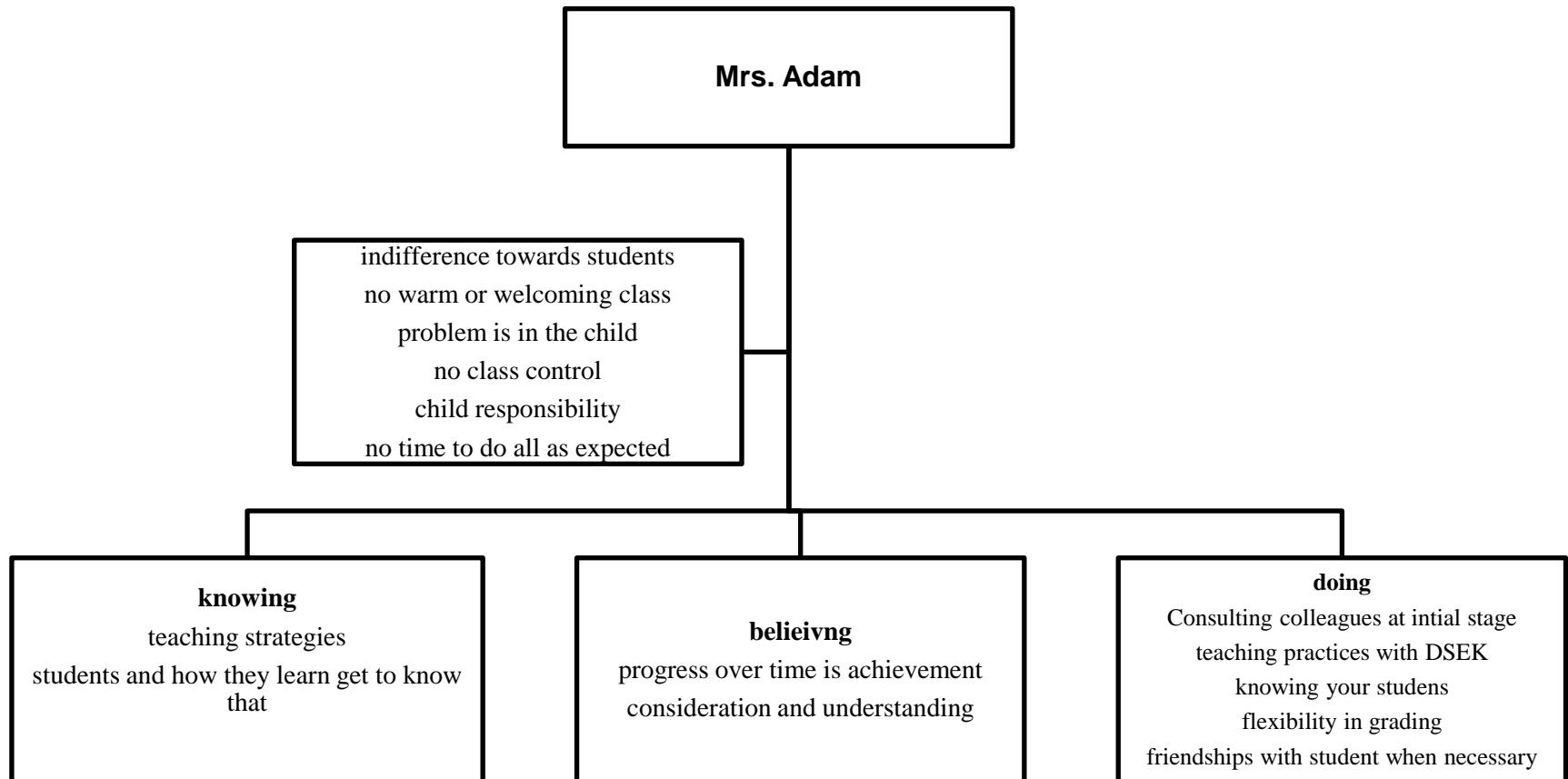


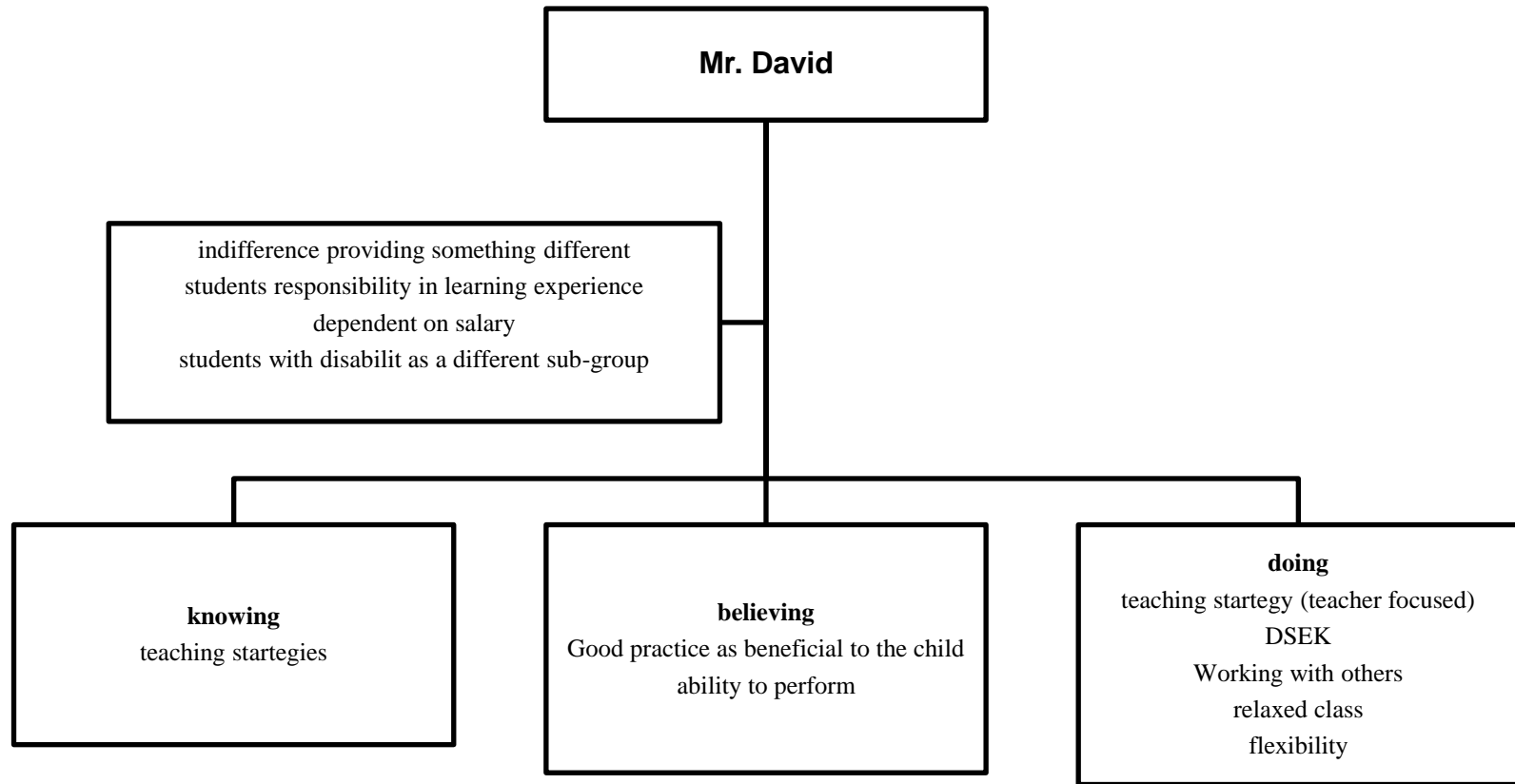


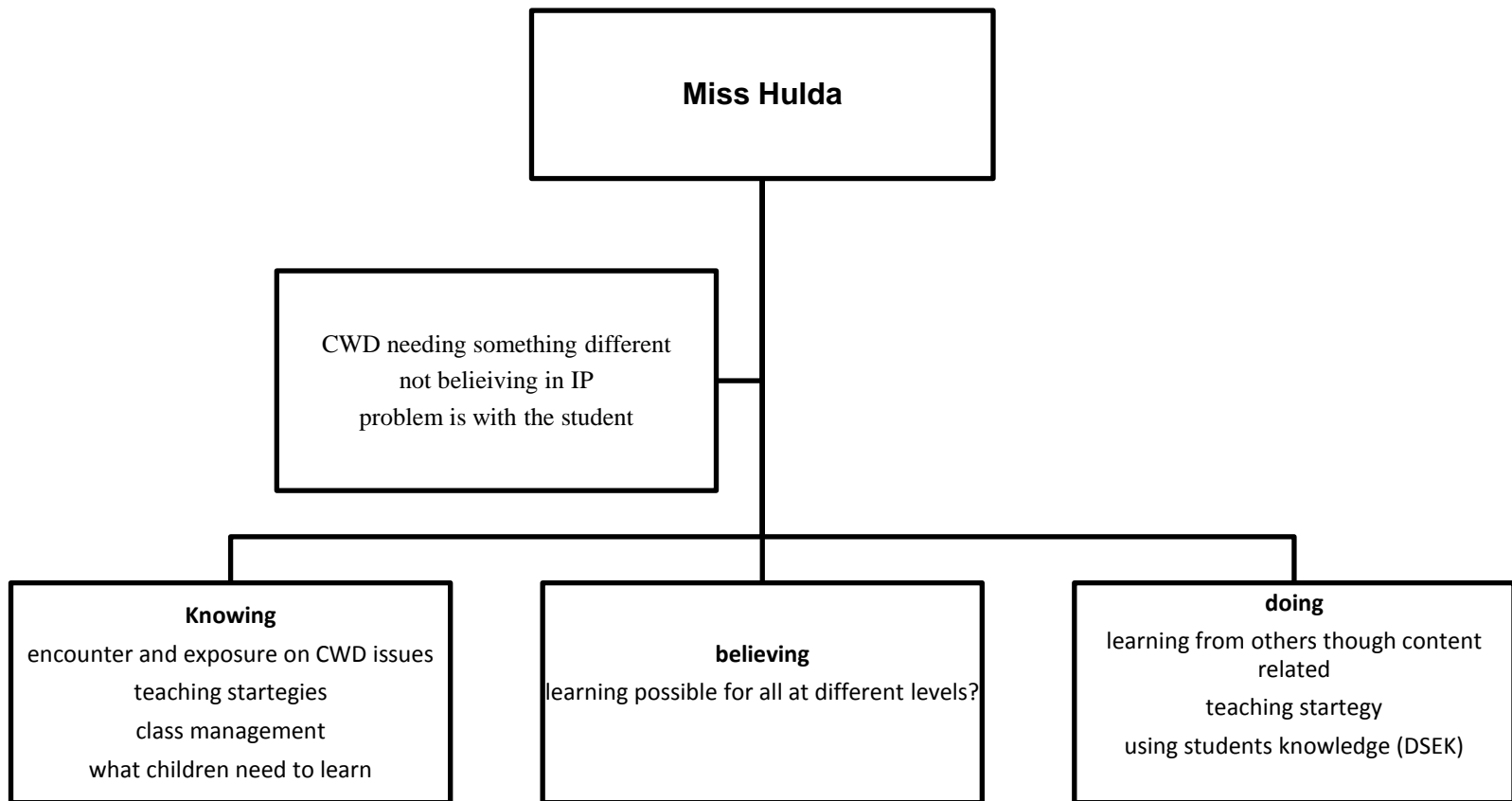


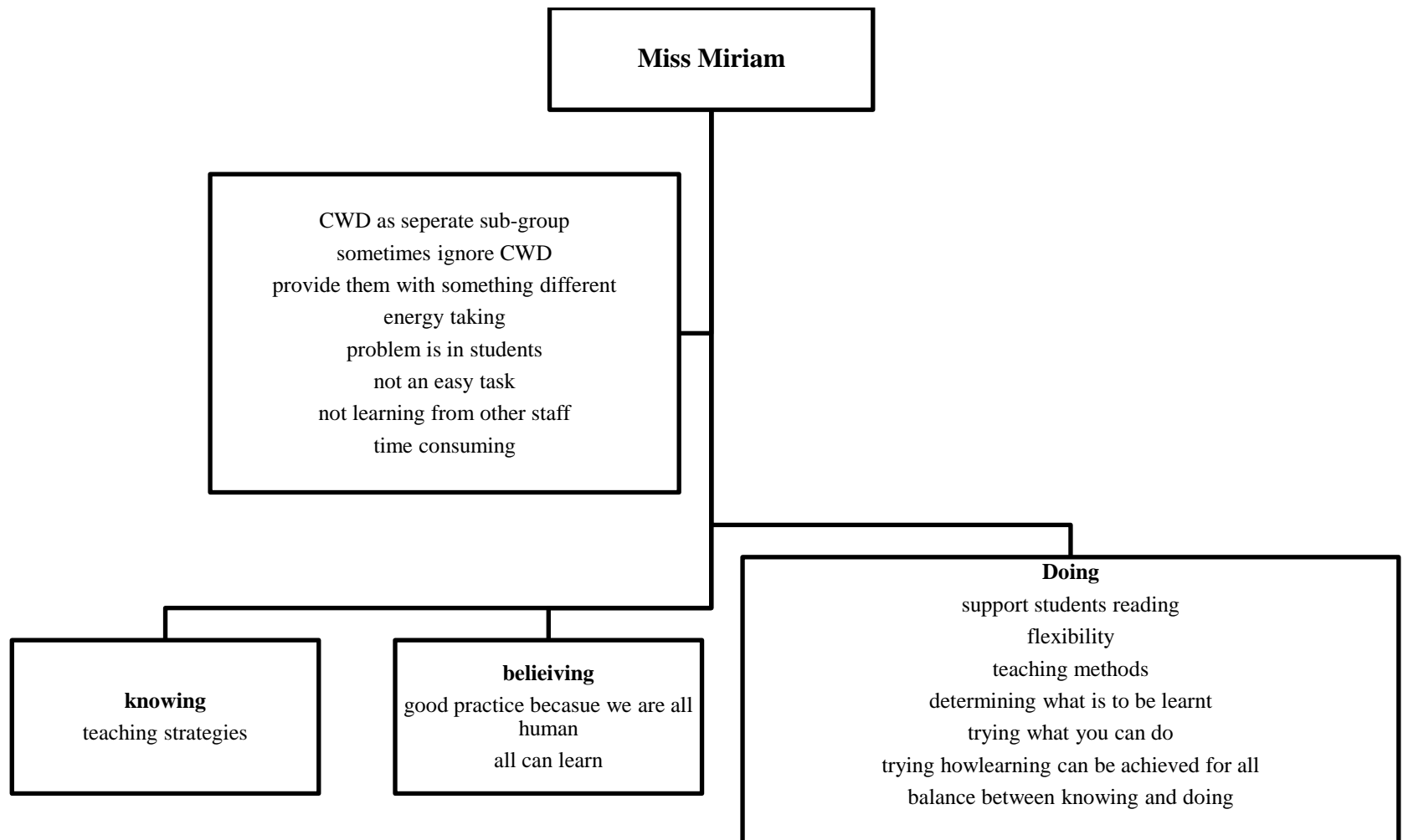


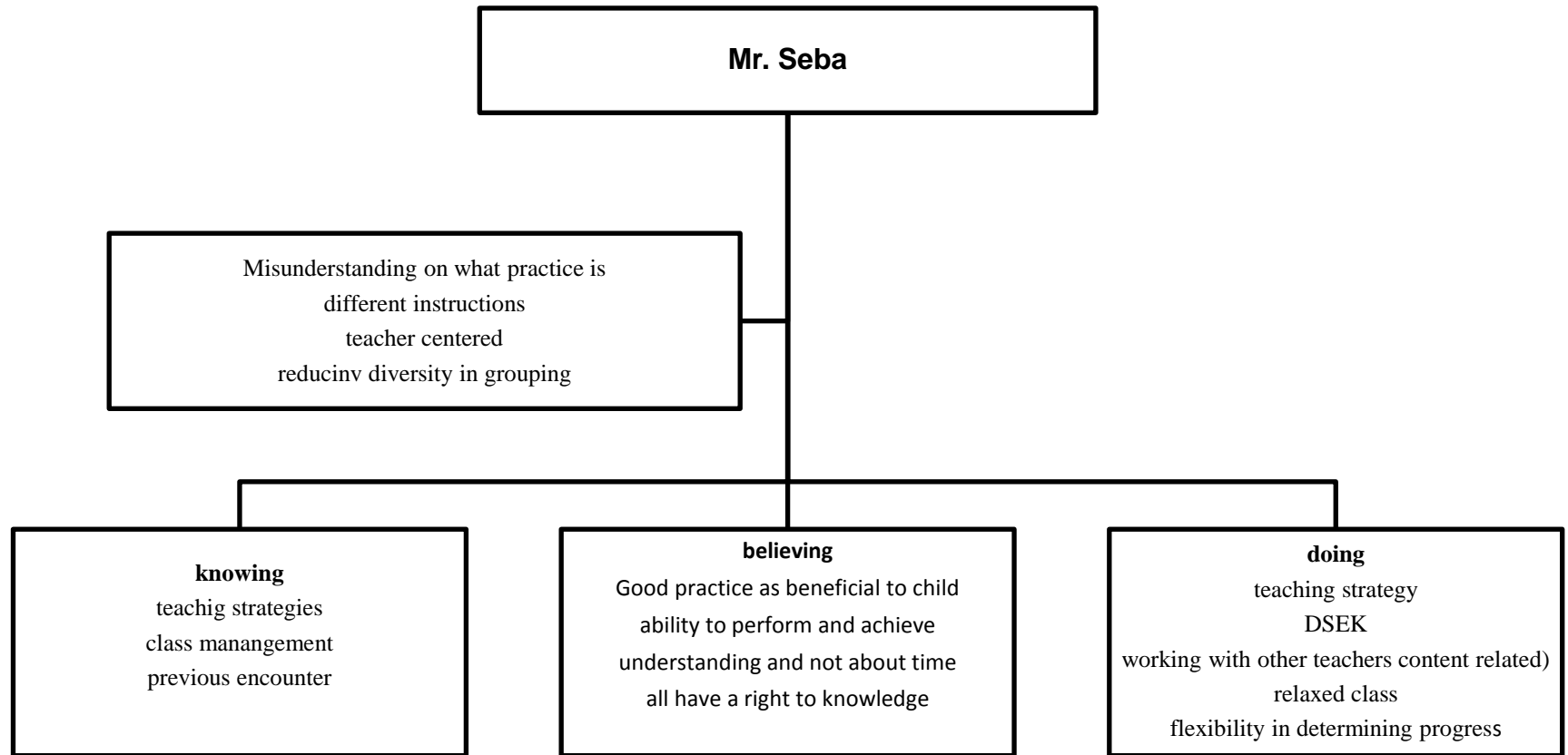












SECTION TWO

PEN PICTURE OF CASE TEACHERS

Miss Hulda

Miss Hulda is middle-aged and has been teaching business studies at Azikiwe School for five years. Prior to that, she had been an administrative staff member within the school. While she worked as a member of the school's administrative staff, she pursued a teaching qualification, a National Certificate in Education (NCE). On her return she decided to join the teaching staff in order to utilize all of the skills and knowledge that she had acquired. She explained how this was perceived as a naïve decision by some of her colleagues because of the effort required compared to the salary that teachers receive. But she was more interested in teaching than the financial benefit of the job. For Miss Hulda, although she was taken by surprise by the presence of a child with a visual impairment in the same class as others, she was ready to take this on as part of the challenges of teaching.

Mr. David

Mr. David is a teacher who has taught agricultural science for 17 years at Azikiwe School. He had already obtained a National Certificate in Education (NCE) prior to commencing his career as a teacher at Azikiwe School. However, he has done further studies over the years and now has his first degree in Agricultural science. In explaining his initial thoughts on the presence of a child with a disability in his Agricultural class, he explained that he did not think it strange since he once had a visually impaired secondary school mate. For Mr. David having a former classmate with a visual impairment made him reflect on how he could extend his practice to his students who currently have visual impairments.

Miss Miriam

Miss Miriam has also been working at Azikiwe School for about six months. This is her second session in the school. She did not train as a teacher but has since joined the teaching line after completing her first degree in computer science. For Miss Miriam, her initial experience was challenging especially because she went into a class to meet a child with a visual impairment. She explained how she did not know what to do. She did not ask any of the other experienced teachers.

Mr. Seba

Mr. Seba is a Basic Technology teacher who has been teaching at Azikiwe School for a few months. This is also his second session at the school just like Miss Miriam. However, prior to coming to teach at Azikiwe School, he had taught in another school for about four years. He also has a National Certificate in Education training and has just completed his first degree in Basic Technology Education. For Mr. Seba, his initial reaction was that of reflecting on his teacher training course when he was introduced to the class on his first day at Azikiwe School. During his teacher training he had always overlooked the training on disability issues because he had always assumed he was not

going to teach them as a regular classroom teacher. This he recalled on his first day at Azikiwe School.

Mr. Absalom

Mr. Absalom is an experienced mathematics teacher. He has had many years of teaching experience in about six other schools before coming to teach at Awolowo School. In all of his other years of teaching experience, he has never had a child with a disability in his classroom. This is his second year working at Awolowo School. He explained that his initial reaction was that of surprise. He encountered the student in the corridors within the school premises. It was this encounter that made him ask his colleagues questions about what exactly such children were doing in a school such as this. This prepared him for classroom encounters, having discussed with his colleagues what they did in their classrooms.

Mr. Lotan

Mr. Lotan is also an experienced mathematics teacher. He has a teaching qualification in Mathematics and Statistics education and has been teaching at Awolowo School for four years. He also has six years of previous teaching experience in two other schools prior to coming to this school. For him, his experience started when he had a child with health challenges in the previous school where he worked. This made him realize that understanding a specific child's need is relevant to addressing the difficulties a child might encounter in the classroom. Regardless of this, on starting his teaching experience at Awolowo School, he observed the presence of children with disabilities. For Mr. Lotan, he was not taken by surprise because he always had makes enquiries when he comes to work in a new school setting.

Mrs. Nehemiah

Mrs. Nehemiah has worked in Awolowo School for seven years now teaching CRS and she has also stood in as the guidance counsellor. Prior to coming to teach at Awolowo School, she had 12 years of teaching experience at another school where she taught a child with physical disabilities in the classroom alongside others. It was during this experience that she realized that disability does not mean fixed ability and thus coming to Awolowo School to meet students with another nature of disability did not surprise her. She also had the opportunity to interact with students with disabilities in the school as a School counsellor before teaching them in the classroom.

Mr. Weng

Mr. Weng is a home economics teacher who has taught at Awolowo School for about seven years. He has a degree in Home economics. For him, when he first came in as a substitute teacher to stand in for a teacher on leave, he found the situation very strange. He followed up after the teaching and realized that the students wrote as well as the others and their performance was no less than any other student. This changed his perception about children with disabilities learning in classrooms with their peers.

Mr. Othniel

Mr. Othniel is a creative arts teacher who has taught at Awolowo School for seven

years now. He has a degree in Fine arts. For Mr. Othniel, he did not find the situation new as he had experienced working with a hearing impaired colleague at his former school where he taught for some years. Moreover, he has had the opportunity to teach in a classroom where there was a child with Down syndrome in his early days of teaching. These experiences have stayed with him until now. This has influenced how he perceives things even at Awolowo School.

Mr. Jutur

Mr. Jutur is an English teacher who has worked at Gowon High School for six years. He has undergone an NCE and a degree in English Education. He was initially a teacher in a lower level of Basic education (from year 1 – year 6) before he was transferred to the upper level of basic education on the request of the school authority for an English teacher. For him his initial reaction to the presence of a child with a disability was to ask the children if they understood what was happening in the classroom. He went on to find out from them how best they learn. For Mr. Jutur, the purpose of teaching is to lead a child to a place where learning can be said to have occurred.

Mr. Noah

Mr. Noah is a mathematics teacher who has taught at Gowon High School for six and a half years now. For him, his purpose in teaching is to ensure that each child is able to acquire something that makes them meaningful later in life. Although he thinks that having a child with a disability in his mathematics class is an extra workload, he is happy to do it as long as it brings happiness to all of the children.

Mrs. Adam

Mrs. Adam is a social studies teacher who has been at Gowon High School for three years now. Her experience started with her not having an idea of what to do. For Mrs. Adam, the process of encounter was a gradual process especially for a child with intellectual difficulties before she discovered how best to include the child in classroom encounters. She explained how she started by deciding to be hard on the students until she later came to the realization that individuals are different and to effectively teach a student, you have to try to know that student and understand how best they can have a meaningful learning experience.